THE GODDESS OF GHOSTS

C. C. MARTINDALE S.J.

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BY

C. C. MARTINDALE, S.J.

EDITOR OF THE "HOUSEHOLD OF GOD" SERIES;
AUTHOR OF "JOCK, JACK AND THE CORPORAL," "MR. FRANCIS NEWNES," ETC.

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τωι

Θ

τῷ πολλὰ μὲν ὀνείρατα συνειδότι μοι χειμερινὰ, ἱλαρὸν δὲ καὶ ὄλβιον τὸ θέρος συνδιημερευκότι, νῦν δὲ, πολλὰ γὰρ μεταξὺ οὔρεά τε σκιόεντα θάλασσά τε ἠχήεσσα—oh, well; since I've got in your favourite verse, and not too awkwardly, I may as well relapse, and offer you in English these long-due odds and ends. You remember how you used to make me promise you an Explanatory Preface—well, not as portentous, quite, as that Modern's whom we used to read out there under the yew hedge, but still, explanatory—and how hard I would fight to be let off. I hate explanations. I find them so humiliating, and so impertinent, and bumptious. Because they imply, don't they? either that one's been obscure, or that the reader's dull, or that one's written something at least worth worrying about. And Diodidaktos, that evening over at Ephesus, made it quite clear, surely, that the Real Thing is essentially the Inexplicable. . . .

However. Suppose that in these stories I have just wanted to talk about some youthful topics,

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like melancholy, beauty, love, or enterprise? or suppose, again, I have been all the while pre-occupied in them with the mystery of *life?* for life remains a mystery, even without the capital L which we both (like Michael!) quite detest. Where is its source at least, if we cannot define its self? Swinburne (still your friend?) said that the world has grown grey from the Galilean's breath, and he taught that, with dying Greece, the general life has gasped itself away. *He* said that His Coming was but that we should *have* life, and have it more abundantly. Greece was out for life, I know; but could Greece give, or even get it? Euripides thought not, and fainted for weariness even when Andromeda went freed. Circe—I tried hard to write Kirke; but really I couldn't—Circe gave her lovers *a* life, yet Elpenor "never came to anything." The childish Greek stared into the Sphinx's face; but the riddle remained unsolved, and his human soul could answer him nothing but an echo of his question. Was it all waste of effort, then, all that history? No, no! *καί τις θεὸς ἡγεμόνευεν.* Philippides ran, not for nothing. *Ascendentibus di manum porrigunt* (This isn't the Latin story-book, so I oughtn't to quote Seneca: but Rome herself learnt her philosophy from Greece); and so, *ὁ Λόγος σὰρξ ἐγένετο.* I know that for many souls, the old lights then were quenched, and the new Light remained meaning-

less: doubtless, too, Philosophy halted alongside of the Apostle, and never quite did meet him.—But "Unchanging Lakedaimon"? Well, some of our friends (who don't change, either) will say that's just a love story. Perhaps it is. Men *wanted* the great Friend. . . . So, to sum up, the world *has* become a sacrament most blessed; and in the ancient garden the lonely man learnt from his baby how Communion, possible in its fullness with Him only who was true God and true Man, must never mean divorce from that Nature whose eyes, when truly understood, reflect the heavens—and would to God I could better have sung the lauds of that human nature and of Him who has made His home therein. Do not fear its beauty, or its love, once you have tasted His.

There! that's all the stories, and you may find this Preface just as perversely mixed as they are, and you may quote that foreign sage we smiled at, who asked of us "plainer diction" (wasn't it?) and "clearer thought." . . . You won't get it.

Oh no, though! I've left out the *Goddess of Ghosts*, poor thing. But *her* you understood straight away. Still, so many people have asked me What Became of Elinor, that I ought to mention my belief that she *either* (*a*) went on alone as a sweet, self-denying governess all her life (and that solved some fifty per cent. of the

Riddle), *or* (*β*) she became a Carmelite nun (and that solved about ninety-five per cent.), *or* (*γ*) she married *Duke*, not Hardy (and that would be the full solution. May it be brought to pass !).

Meanwhile, O Theophylakt, you are out there in your trenches : one life is flooding round about you ; me at my donnish desk it quite passes by. But the Other springs for both of us from my daily Altar, from which it isn't a long, long way to anywhere. ὃ ἐγένετο ἐν αὐτῷ, ζωὴ ἦν.

And since, as I write, I hear that the bursting shell has not been so unkind as to refuse us altogether your return, I trust the more that the two lives are yet intended, for a while, to increase and interfuse, and to perfect each the other. χαῖρε μάλα.

The tiny alterations in edition two imply no change in the affection with which I offered you the first one. Yet the circling years have done better than trace mere circles, landing us constantly back where we started. πολλὰ μεταξύ—but constructive and consolidating things, none to be lastingly regretted. And so for the future—still ἀρξάμενοι.

C. C. M.

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THE HALF OF A BROKEN HOPE

I

ELPENOR

Ἐλπήνωρ δέ τις ἔσκε νεώτατος, οὔτε τι λίην
ἄλκιμος ἐν πολέμῳ οὔτε φρεσὶν ἧσιν ἀρηρώς.
(*Od.* x, 552.[1])

THIS is the true story of Elpenor, for Odysseus did not fully understand it, though he was versed in seas and cities and knew the minds of men. Yet had he not altogether learnt the thoughts of youths, and their griefs, and their bewilderments.

The boy was named *Elpenor*, for his father and mother prayed that he should become the hope of many men, and because they themselves were full of hope in his destined manhood. For as yet they had been childless, save for two daughters only. And from the first they taught him that he was to be a king of men, the swiftest in the race, the surest with the hunting-spear, the bravest in battle, the subtlest in the council, and the friend of gods.

And, indeed, he was a lusty baby, loud in tears and quick to laugh; and when he ran, shouting, in the shadowy hall or the echoing colonnades, it was like the flashing of the sun, or the white wind tossing the poplar leaves. And he had a wooden sword, and a crest of

[1] Now there was one Elpenor, a mere boy; neither at all too stalwart in war, nor firm knit in his spirit.

wool, and his nurse was a captive queen, and the handmaids were her ladies.

When he became a boy and sat behind his father, he would listen to the minstrels singing of how the gods and the giants fought, and he would watch their battles in the crumbling embers of the fire, and he would see himself, too, there beside the blood-red war-god. And in his sleep divine dreams stood above his head and whispered to him, and he would cry out, and toss the fleeces off, and wake astonished, for he would have been in the midst of the swaying tangle of the fight, and would have slain kings of men, and have shone in star-bright armour.

And of hunting he wove a web of thoughts, and planted his broad blade in the shoulder of white-tusked boars, and, crouching behind his tower-huge shield, drove his spear into the lion's gullet, and out behind the neck, all bloody.

And he observed the place, at the white stones near the folding-doors, where he should sit among the old men, and should rise, and lift his staff, and speak words torrent-tumbling, or sharp and hammered, or like golden honey, stealing men's wit and will.

Also, he felt himself the favourite of the Immortal Gods, and alone powerful over sacrifice, and wise to read the dark entrails and the flight of birds.

And he would tell the handmaids, and, now and again, the henchmen, of the great things he should do; and his childish boasting filled the sails of their hopes, that they should share in the nearing kingdom of his manhood.

Yet he was not firm knit in soul, for when he sat and listened to the council, he would be travelling in his thoughts, and would follow the flying does, or would smite the misty sea into foam and furrows; at the hunt

he would miss his stroke, for he wondered suddenly if some god might not be hiding in the thicket; and his work he would leave undone, and go like a blind man, and stammer with his tongue, because he would be seeing the windy battlements of Troy, or be rousing Ithaka and the islands to follow him. For already they had long been fighting below Troy, but he was too young to go with the rest.

And he found no one who should establish him on deep-set foundation-stones for the spirit, because his father and mother could not see him rightly, so brilliant were their hopes for him that dazzled them; and the lords and captains thought lightly of him, because he saw dreams in daylight, and his thoughts wandered in the council, and his blow wavered in the hunt, and he would talk when silence was desired, and at the games black night would come down upon his forehead.

For, indeed, he would see himself suddenly to be as nothing, because in boyhood he was still a child, and, on the verge of youth, a boy; and, when manhood should come up behind him, it would find him slack of grip and unfit for achievement; so was he swayed by gusty moods and passions, and talked aloud and fierily, and then sat silent, brooding, and was unstable in his soul.

Now when the war was all but over, his parents (for they could not tell it was so) sent him out to fight beside their overlord Odysseus, saying with glad tears, "When he comes back he will be a man." Nor could they guess the fate that was allotted him, since not even his manner of life that he lived in their own house had they been wise to understand.

So under Troy he fought a little, none too valiantly,

but he showed no cowardice, for he was not a coward. And at times he was foolhardy, and at times he trembled; but they said: He is not yet a man.

And returning, he attacked the city of the Kikonés, when Odysseus attacked it; and he was unscathed, and drunk with success, and he defied Odysseus, and was the first to slay oxen and drink wine beside the sea, and loitered till the Kikonés, at dawn, came many as the leaves come and the flowers in springtime, and from that fight too he escaped unhurt and undeserving.

And where the Lotus eaters dwelt, he was again the first to taste the lotus, for all sweet things seemed sweeter to him than to any other man; and he forgot his hopes and his manhood, and was for living all his life in that land of dream, but Odysseus haled him back weeping to the ship.

And in Kyklops-land, Odysseus left him in the ship, for he said, He is a child merely.

After this they visited Aiolos, who gave Odysseus all the winds bound up in a sack. But Elpenor, fancying it was infinite gold concealed there, cut the cord, and loosed the storms, and brought them near to death.

And the Laistrygonés also he escaped, because Odysseus had placed the lad, the silly lad, in his own crew, and that crew, at his bidding, alone of all the others fled scatheless.

And they came to the island of Circe, the dreadful and divine, but her words were human. Her father was the fire of the Sun, and her mother was the child of Ocean, the infinite, the unfathomable, the all-compassing. From the violet sea her island blossomed, girdled with white sand, with ridge on ridge of forest, all manner of

green, and red like copper, and hyacinthine blue. Cypress and ash and poplar and trailed vines climbed to where from the topmost crest sprang straight into the pale blue sky the paler smoke of her cedar-piled hearth; and behold, meeting suddenly the breeze, the fine stem of smoke wavered and bowed, and sank drifting wide like a goddess's grey and fragrant veil. And beneath the roof of trees, or through soft meadows of violets and ferns and parsley where fountains, blue and crystal, sang along their channels, paths rose to the white palace, with its grilles of gold and its frieze of lapis-lazuli. And from the house her voice was heard, a human voice, a woman's voice, though she was so dreadful and divine, daughter of hungry fire and of silent, drowning water. And she sang, sweet yet shrill, and her voice eddied about the men Odysseus sent to spy upon her, and the palace floated and flickered before their eyes to the rhythm of her song as she sang, going to and fro weaving her web of souls.

And only Eurylochos, of whom they said he was timorous, and knew nothing of how a man should live his life, surmised that there was craft, and escaped to tell Odysseus how the men, yes, and the lad Elpenor, had entered Circe's house, and ate the bread she set before them, and drank of her cup, and had been smitten by her rod and turned thereby into swine, and had been herded into styes, and there were fed with husks and acorns and were goaded always with her goad until they bled, and the hills were filled with their noise as they screamed, tortured by the goad; and they fawned horribly upon her fine and milk-pale fingers which tormented them.

I will not relate again how Odysseus, saved by the

mysterious drug, was skilled to restore his friends to their human shape and speech. And they seemed to one another finer men than of old, and of richer blood and firmer wit and will. And Elpenor became, as it seemed, quite one of them, and they said among themselves, How he is changed! and to him they said, At last you are a man!

And for a year they abode there, within the walls of carved cedar wood, with cushioned couches, and fleecy rugs to their feet, and everywhere fine ivory, and gold, and the glory of amethyst and emerald and pearl, and plashing waters, and tawny and crimson wine. But little enough of it they saw; for their eyes were swimming in the violet loveliness of Circe's eyes, and their thoughts were tangled in the golden mist of her hair.

Now whether Elpenor were in truth hated by the gods or loved by them I do not know, or it may be that the mood of his youth was too fluctuant for Circe's self to master him utterly. But during that year of delicate enchantment he grew day by day less happy in her loveliness, and full, as in old times, of dreaming on deeds he never did achieve, and on places where he was not. And this was pain to him, even as it had been pain to see that the comrades of Odysseus, and even Odysseus himself, despised his futile youthfulness. He could not understand the reason why he felt himself not only miserable, but angry with himself, and not only with himself, but with the men who could despise him. But it was that he saw himself aware of far better things than ever he should do, or could do; and also that he saw his comrades to be far, in reality, from being so good as he, though they achieved so much more and so far better. They did what they

did, because they could not help it; because no thing save one showed itself in their thought; because they heard but one voice, saw but one road and a fate that beckoned; they looked not backwards to regret, nor far forwards to investigate, nor to either side to choose. For him the sky had been full of faces, the wind of voices; the wide-wayed earth and the infinite sea had called him to this and to that and he had lost himself in hopes and he had done nothing with his manhood, but had been, first, but as a boy; and then, even in this foolish boyhood had been made into a beast.

And he hated Circe's house, and he hated the styes, and yet he loved them both, and when he saw that, he hated his life; and when it was necessary that they should go homewards, he hated Odysseus and his comrades and his home, even while he loved them and sickened for them; and this was because he saw that never should he be anything anywhere, and that they would of necessity believe that he had nothing in him, and that they must needs discard him.

So on the last night, when the rest rose up from within the house, and clattered down the stairs towards the dawning sea, Elpenor, who had lain apart on the roof, threw himself down headlong and escaped from life altogether and for ever.

And Odysseus, because he was busied with other things, marshalled his crew and left the lad unburied and unwept.

And Circe, singing always, paced by her loom.

And when Odysseus had sailed to the limit set by Ocean, he made his way to Hades, and there saw the Ghost he had expected, and he cried grimly to it:

"Elpenor, how camest thou beneath the gloom and the murk? Swifter wert thou on foot than I with my black ship."

And in after days he told how the ghost had answered him:

"O Zeus-born, son of Laertes, Odysseus many-wiled; there mazed me an evil fate from a god, and my swilling of wine. And in the palace of Circe I had laid me down, nor marked I to come back and down, going to the long stairway, but straight from the roof I fell; and out my neck was broken from the spine-bones, and my life went down to Hades. But thee by those left behind thee do I now beseech, by them that are afar, thy wife, and thy father who did rear thee when thou wast a babe, and by Telemachos, whom thou didst leave in thy halls an only child—for I know that when hence thou farest from the house of Hades thou shalt put in thy well-rigged ship to the isle of Circe—there, O King, I bid thee forthwith of me be mindful; go not thou leaving me unwept, unburied behind thee, turning thy back, lest I become for thee some thing of wrath from the gods; but burn thou me up together with my arms, all that I have; and a tomb pile thou for me on the grey sea's shore, for me a miserable man, to be a tale even for men unborn. These things do thou for me, and plant upon the tomb my oar, wherewith in life, ah me, I would row, being with my comrades."

Now whether Odysseus fashioned the ghost of his own thoughts, and heard from its lips the words he had expected; or whether the ghost, in bitterness, told him what alone it knew, he would understand; or whether, in its pale life, its memories too had faded, and it had but

the thoughts that all men at that time could not but think, who shall be sure?

But Odysseus piled the mound, and placed a pillar on it, and lashed thereto the oar, and it stood at the utmost of the promontory, black on the sky. And the years went by with the sun and the storm, and the oar rotted and fell, and the pillar crumbled, and fell too, and the mound slid this way and that and vanished into the dunes, and the eternal sea lamented. And the lament of the sea, and the deathless music of a poem, are the homage to a boy who never came to anything.

II

DANAË

λάρνακι ἐν δαιδαλέᾳ
(Sim. *fr.* 50).

"My dear," said the poet Simonides to his wife, "I simply cannot do my work if this noise is to go on."

For it was his favourite time for writing, the evening, before supper; and his small daughter, Leukonoë, was racing up and down the passage calling out the Ἔξεχ' ὦ φίλ' ἥλιε, "Come out, dear Sun," though she was all alone and had no one to play the game with her. You could hear her sandals clap-clapping on the marble, and then pad-padding on the rugs which they encountered. Sometimes the rugs evidently slipped forward, and there was a space of astonished silence: but when you are as little as Leukonoë, you have not far to fall, and rugs are soft: and if you make up your mind to cry, and do cry, you annoy papa worse than ever, and will certainly be stopped running up and down the passage. And what else was

there to do, this stormy evening? So on she ran, shouting.

"If she's got to play out there, Myrrha," he continued, "she really must be asked to choose some quieter game. And she can't expect the sun to come out two hours after sunset. It stands to reason."

"Poor little thing," said Myrrha composedly. "And such a rainy day!" And she went on with her woolwork.

"Come out, dear Sun," shrieked Leukonoë with unusual shrillness and suddenness just outside the door.

Simonides threw down his pen.

"My dear," he said, "I really must ask you to have the child removed. It's of the highest importance that I finish this Lament to-night. The Court exacts it. My whole position in Thessaly will suffer if it's not ready for to-morrow. And the bills have simply got to be paid."

"You old darling," said Myrrha, rising, and letting the ball of saffron wool roll into the corner, "you careful old thing."

She installed herself on the arm of her husband's chair, and ruffled his hair, which was growing thin.

He looked lugubriously at her.

"It's all very well," he began.

"You pet!" she said, and kissed the top of his head.

He sighed and folded his hands.

"Now tell me what you're trying to write about," she said coaxingly.

"Why, I told you," he complained. "This is the *Threnos* of Danaë, for the Court. It'll be recited next month at the festival, and it's got to be rehearsed. And here we are three days off the end of Maimakterion."

"Tell me the story of Danaë," she said.

"Akrisios, King of Argos," he began, "having learnt from an oracle that any son of his wife Danaë, should she bear one, would kill him, imprisoned her in a subterranean dungeon built of bronze."

Myrrha yawned slightly behind her husband's head.

"Go on, dear," she said, "I know that part."

"Danaë," said the poet, suddenly enraptured, "was more exquisite than the anemone and fairer than the jonquil. Her eyes were green like pools in the grey limestone; her hair had in it the redness of the sunset, and her neck—Ah, never before her had there been a maid so fair, so fragrant, so gentle, and so prudent, and there never will be."

"Yes, dear, I know," said Myrrha, this time quite frostily (her eyes were brown). "But get along a little more quickly with the story."

Simonides, his spirits slightly dashed, glanced up, and caught her look.

"You absurd person!" he cried; and in his turn he kissed her, but she ducked her head, and his salute alighted crooked, on her ear.

But for all that, harmony was better than restored.

"Then came the Golden Rain . . . Ah, when I read you that part, my Myrrha! How she sat there, with the open roof above her, and the white moon, and the spear points of the stars—so cold, so lonely—her grey-green robes spread round her on the black floor . . . and how the stars suddenly reeled and grew innumerable, and flushed and flashed, and fell in golden tears . . . you can *hear* the sweet patter in my verses," he cried exultantly, "and then the wide warm rhythm when the God made

his Presence known to her, and told her how He loved her . . . It must be chanted to a solemn tone ; a slow, deep voice ; calm, peaceful, austere . . ."

"Well, and then," he went on, petulantly, "I'd just got to the part where Akrisios had discovered her baby, Perseus, and had set her a-sail in the oak chest on the Aegaean sea, and the storm had begun."

"You've got excellent weather," she said encouragingly, "to help you to do the storm."

And in effect the wind was howling, and the cypresses bending and creaking ; the rain whistled off the tiles and rushed in the gutter, and afar the sea moaned hoarsely.

"Indeed, I have," he answered. "And I had the initial line so well—the whole dipping and pitching of the coffer in the huge hollow waves :

ὅτε λάρνακι ἐν—δαιδαλέᾳ

you can *see* her slide down and quickly up—up—the wave, hang poised, and then down and up again. Now *can't* you, Myrrha ?"

"Yes, dear," she said obediently. "But why can't you go on ?"

"Because of that infernal noise," growled he.

"Well, Baby White-thoughts shall be made to pay for the harm she's done, and shall tell us what to put next."

She opened the door and called Leukonoë.

"Come here, White-thoughts," she cried. "Mummy and Baby-baby-White-thoughts are in a big box floating on the sea, and it's rough, and the spray is splashing up and Baby White-thoughts will get all wet."

"No !" cried Leukonoë, "because Baby White-

thoughts will snuggle down into Mummy's big red cloak and be covered quite up, and so she won't get wet."

"But what will Mummy do if she can't see her Baby-girl any more, because she's all hidden away?"

"Mummy may peep now and then, and see Baby's face and Mummy may kiss it and cover it up warm again."

(Simonides ecstatically wrote a line.)

"But Mummy's so cold and so lonely, and she sees the big waves, and she's wet with the rain, and she *does* so want someone to comfort her, and White-thoughts has gone to sleep!"

"And she woke her babe, and she cried——" began Simonides . . .

"*Did* she, Baby?" said the mother.

"O *no*, Mummy!" cried White-thoughts. "Baby couldn't help going to sleep in the crimson cloak, though she *did* try hard to keep awake to comfort Mummy. But when Baby had gone to sleep, Mummy is so brave she'd never have waked Baby up for fear Baby should be frightened too."

"You exquisite child!" exclaimed her astonished father.

"She's a little White-thoughts," laughed her mother.

"But Mummy, that's what *you'd* have thought," said the baby, standing up on her mother's knees and kissing her.

"You Sweetness," said Myrrha, kissing her, too, in both eyes, "and now what comes next?"

"Mummy would have prayed to the God," averred the baby.

"Oho," said Simonides to his wife. "And pray what would poor Danaë have said to Zeus, madam? It was

Zeus who was responsible for her perilous voyage, you know. . . . I think I see a splendid bitter speech preparing for me . . . though I fear impiety."

Leukonoë listened open-eyed.

"Alas!" said her mother: "Yes, what would she have said to Zeus?"

And she had a moment's vision of the fate of women, driven on to tossing seas of doubt and heartbreak by a hidden destiny. And she was silent.

"But Mummy," said White-thoughts, as the silence lasted: "did Daddy say the God put you in the box in the sea?"

"Yes, darling," said she: "Daddy said almost that."

"Well, Mummy, what were you afraid of? The dear gods could see you on the sea, couldn't they? and they wouldn't let it hurt you if they saw you in the storm."

Myrrha still sat quiet.

"Some God was guide," she quoted at last: "*καί τις θεὸς ἡγεμόνευεν*. That must be it, I suppose. Ah, Simonides; there's the answer! Homer answers everything, and even you will never beat him!"

"My dear, "said Simonides, to whom comparisons were particularly odious, "you're a very well-educated woman, I know, but it's quite bad enough to have people comparing me with persons like Lasos and Anakreon and that detestable young prig, the Theban Pindar. And now Homer! Don't please talk to me of Homer. I don't go in for epic."

"No, dearest," said she, looking over his shoulder, for he had been scribbling while the baby talked: "Why, you've written a whole strophe! Read it to me."

"Myrrha," said he, solemnly, "in no language that

has been or that shall be, shall you find a poet capable of putting these thoughts of mine to a diviner rhythm. Listen to the waves beating, to her heart sinking and leaping, to her thoughts and hopes and angers wavering," and he read :

Her in the carven chest
What time the gust and gale and surging wave
Smote into fear, and set her eyes a-stream,
She Perseus in her dear embraces pressed,
And spoke, O baby mine, what grief I have—
But thou soft-sleepest, soul unruffled, sweet a-dream
In cruel cradle of bronze-rivetted oak
'Neath skies unlit and midnight's murky cloak.
You have no care,
Dear little eyes, curtained in hiding hair,
Dear little face, in crimson robe so pale,
For the deep racing wave, salt spray, and screaming gale.
She weeps.
Alas ! to thee if horror horror were,
Wouldst thou not wake, O sweet, my words to hear ? . . .
She recovers herself.
Ah no ! but sleep, my babe—and sleep, O sea,
And sleep, heart's anguish infinite ;
And ah—some change of heart, Sire Zeus, from *Thee* . . .
Lord—if my prayer hath been beyond the right
Presumptuous, pardon me . . .[1]

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[1] What he actually wrote was this :

ὅτε λάρνακι ἐν δαιδαλέᾳ
ἄνεμός τέ μιν πνέων κινηθεῖσά τε λίμνα
δείματι ἤριπεν, οὔτ' ἀδιάντοισι παρειαῖς,
ἀμφί τε Περσέϊ βάλλε φίλαν χέρα,
εἶπέ τ' ὦ τέκος οἷον ἔχω πόνον
σὺ δ' ἀωτεῖς, γαλαθηνῷ τ' ἤτορι κνώσσεις ἐν ἀτέρπει
δόυρατι χαλκεογομφῷ,

"And now," she said, quietly, "now that Danaë, after her one impulse of distrust and anger, is once more docile, what shall she say to the God?"

"Well," said he, "she must be certain that He will guide His elect maiden and her baby to a safe port, and that He will make her suffering worth while, and will bring the babe to some great destiny. But I dare not write her words till I shall first have prayed."

He rose, and the baby White-thoughts ran to the door.

"Come out, dear Sun," she called: Ἔξεχ' ὦ φίλ' ἥλιε.

νυκτὶ ἀλαμπεῖ κυανέῳ τε δνόφῳ σταλείς·
ἅλμαν δ' ὑπερθε τεᾶν κομᾶν βαθεῖαν
παρίοντος κύματος οὐκ ἀλέγεις
οὐδ' ἀνέμου φθόγγον,
πορφυρέᾳ κειμένος ἐν χλανίδι, καλὸν πρόσωπον.
εἰ δέ τοι δεινὸν τό γε δεινὸν ἦν
καί κεν ἐμῶν ῥημάτων λεπτὸν ὑπεῖχες οὖας.
κέλομαι δ', εὖδε βρέφος, εὐδέτω δὲ πόντος,
εὐδέτω δ', ἄμετρον κακόν·
μεταιβολία δέ τις φανείη, Ζεῦ πάτερ, ἐκ σέο.
ὅτι δὲ θαρσάλεον ἔπος
εὔχομαι, νόσφιν δίκας, σύγγνωθί μοι.

And who shall say that he was wrong, and that his words could, by any skill how great soever, be equalled in the music of any other tongue?

ANDROMEDA IN CHAINS

δυσέρωτες δὴ φαινόμεθ' ὄντες
τοῦδ', ὅτι τοῦτο στίλβει κατὰ γᾶν.[1]

"I AM very tired," said the poet Euripides, and he let himself sink into the rugs that heaped his chair. The chair stood on the terrace of his little house in Salamis, for he loved his estate there, and had built a cottage with a terrace, and had transported to it quite a number of his books. Above the sheltered, curving bay, the house stood clasped by cliffs, with its back to Attika. Even Sunion was invisible, and he had nothing before him but the sea, closed in by the hills of Epidauria, and the craggy pyramid of Aigina: the sapphire water, dancing with little suns of splendour, was jewelled too with a whole constellation of islets, amethyst and emerald to see, and, when the sun struck them, aflame with living gold. Round Kekryphaleia and Pityonesos the waves broke brilliantly, and even all about the tiny rocks quite near at hand the Saronic waters made soundless music.

In his great fatigue this wide and splendid view and this music of the silence soothed the poet's nerves. The breeze rocked the fragrant fig-tree which broke the sunlight: gnarled and tortured of trunk, with its elaborate foliage and luscious-coloured fruit, it made significant contrast with the Doric austerity of the marble. More

[1] "Mad lovers, ah, we prove ourselves, of this thing, whate'er it be, that glitters over the earth."—Euripides, *Hippolytus*.

than once, the cynical humour of Euripides had marked the contrast, and he had sought into his soul . . .

"Pour in more sea-water," he murmured, holding out the cup to his slave. The honey-cakes were sweet; and still too sweet, to his taste, was the wine. The salt sea-water gave it edge, and Kallaischros had it ever fresh to hand.

"I am utterly tired," repeated the poet.

"Yet you have done naught, to-day, to weary you, Euripides," answered the slave, a favourite, who was suffered to speak readily to his taciturn and shrinking lord.

"Done!" cried he. "Had I done more I might have been less wearied. Yet has my body been tired and fore-done ever since those dull trainers of my youth tried to coerce me into *doing* . . . The stadium! The gymnasium! And they would have made of me an athlete . . ." His voice died away in contemptuous reminiscence.

"Yet was it not of my body I was speaking," he went on after a moment, "it is my soul that flags."

Kallaischros struck a mellow phrase from his lyre.

The poet smiled.

"No," said he. "The God sleeps. What have you there but echoing shell, and pegs, and strings plucked vainly? And even if he spoke I should not hear. Idly the God outside us speaks, if the God within lies deaf."

"Master," said the other, "often, the Athenians say, have you been seen to write, lightly and as though for play—oh, twice a hundred lines of that talk wherein they so delight, thrust and parry, twist and turn of argument, delightful refutation, and verses compact and rounded as none other's, and quick-tinkling sentences. . . ."

"That," he answered, half sadly, "is but the glib

tongue, well-running to the whistle of the wit. But never is it the God! And as things are, the wit itself is weary, and the soul is weary."

"Yet do the Athenians love such easy verses. Better is it, say they, than the very law-court. Let them rouse you, master!"

The slave spoke to sting Euripides, and he succeeded, being expert in his master's moods.

"The Athenians! the law-court! I tell thee, and have told thee, that though I flatter those itching ears, basely perhaps, not *there* is the true Euripides! I deliberately descend. . . . I confess that I yearn for prizes! Even now, I have had so few!" He broke off again. For he knew that, often enough, it was no deliberate descent. At such hours he *could* no better.

"What are prizes to the love they have for you? The night streets are loud with your lyrics! What youth but dreams himself a luckier Hippolytos? Alkestis—" the mischievous slave smiled—"no worthy mid-aged dame but fancies herself, to-day, espoused to some new Admetos, and pictures her own death, endured for the sake of her heartless husband—and meanwhile the good fellow is sweating in the town that she may eat and live and love him. . . . And with love-sick Phaidras and star-like Helens, what maidens' bowers but are crammed?"

"The Euripides-fever, they call it. What of it? This song or that they love; they sing them, when they are drunk; this heroine or that sets girls, for the hour, out of themselves, and, for a whole week, moping. But what else can such trifles work?"

"This much at least: your songs have freed the prisoners in the quarries of Syrakuse, when they sang

them; the sorrows of your heroines have helped poor women—how many, who knows?—to understand the mystery of their own soul, and of love."

"Women!" he muttered contemptuously. "Love!"

"Do not speak ill of love!" cried the slave. "Your sweetest choruses are rainbowed by his dear and dewy wings. Love is all round about you. The sun's warmth caresses the gold shoulders of the islands, and the passionate waves fall prostrate to kiss their feet! At sunset, Love calls the birds to their mates among the rocks; clearer than herdsmen's piping, Love summons the goats to their pen; let Love, dear master, bring to your lips new lyrics to enchant our city."

"I am old," he jeered. "I am tired and old and ugly." His face, with its unkempt hair and his grey beard, looked strained and haggard in the sunlight. Doubtless the lips grinned, but the suffering was visible, all the time, where the little wrinkles drew tight round about the eyes and dragged the brows down towards the nose.

"Have you not taught me," Kallaischros answered, "to see beauty even in the hideous? Is not that why you gave me my strange name? Fair in foul; truth in lies; love from strife!"

"That was when I had higher hopes, and held firmer to a philosophy! Now there is mist above and mist below, and a glittering somewhat between, and for the rest—I know not. I cannot even fight, nor hate, as I used, and ought, any more. Were there but clear evil, sheer ugliness, sheer lie! As it is, I doubt what seems most foul, even as I doubt what is fair. I fear; why can I not rather trust? Yet fear itself, who knows whether

it be evil? Who knows if Life be not, in good truth, Death; and whether, yonder, Death may not prove Life? We drift on fable, idly. Willingly were I God's slave; but what is God? Nature? but what is nature? The Mind of Man? Necessity? What Gorgon's head has looked upon me, slaying all that—I will not say, that was good, but at least that lived! Now I know nothing in the whole world save that I am tired unendingly."

"The Gorgon's Head, master! Perseus, Andromeda!" urged the soft voice. "There is a theme for you; with them you have dealt but imperfectly and feebly."

"Perseus!" he answered, irascibly. "Portents and bogeys! The bloody snake-locks: the three grey sisters with their one eye and their one tooth for all: the sea-monster, and the sandal two cubits long! I have done with those stage-properties. That was for Aischylos, who liked to make children scream and women sick. Even I have used them overmuch."

"But, Euripides, re-tell the sacred myth. Fashion it anew, as you so well can, who twice told—and so variously—the tale of Helen! And master . . . cannot you hear the chorus of Aethiopian maidens, bewailing white Andromeda, where, chained to the rock, she waits the monster to devour her? Here is room for songs, woven of winds and seas and women's tears. The sheer crag; the sweep of the halcyon's wing, sea-blue; the hero, like a star, cleaving the spray on his love-pinioned sandals!"

"Yes," brooded the other, the responsive rhythms already rising and rippling round about him. "There is room, there, for music and for tears. And for the mystery of life; the haunting horror, the soul's imprisonment; freedom flashing into the dark dungeon. . . ."

And first, he saw no further than the questioning of the chorus:

O pale against the rocks,
O terror-eyed,
Within thy lips what locks
The song? what horrors hide
The wonder of the waters at thy side?

"That is a tolerable strophe. Pause a little. The anti-strophe will not come easily," said Kallaischros maliciously. Thus best would he stimulate the poet, and awaken his soul to the divine advent.

Immediately he continued:

"O black beneath the rocks,"
She faint replied,
"All Hell the sunlight mocks,
And lurking Deaths abide
Greedy to leap and drag me down their bride."

"The notion," murmured the critic, "is not vulgar, though the versification halts. Yet, sung to music, it will pass. But here rather is matter for speeches, master; not for brief choric odes. You are not Pindar, relating the myth in lyric."

Euripides looked scowlingly on Kallaischros and then proceeded in a loud voice, staring out to sea and wholly disregarding him.

"The myth will have to be retold. Kepheus shall be king, as ever, of the Aethiopians, though that they do not dwell in Syria, where they show the Rock, I know well; but what matter! The black-fleshed Kepheus, and his white—oh, milky-white, snowy-whitest bride, Kassiopoeia—she among those Aethiopians shall grow to boast, shall avow herself fairer than the Nereids—though how the

barbarians may name the Nereids, I know not, nor matters it at all. Or shall it be that she shall vaunt her daughter, even Andromeda, fairer than those Ocean-born?" He broke off, musing.

After a while, the slave, to lead him forward, yet softly, and almost chantingly, to preserve the rhythm of his thoughts, prolonged the tale.

"And Poseidon, King of All Seas, ordered that the maiden should be chained to a rock, where a monster, whom he should send, might devour her."

"She was chained to no rock," proclaimed the poet. "She was set, a princess all alone, upon a tiny island where but few men lived, and they, fishermen. And the law was, that on her rock she must abide, nor sail thence on any boat, nor row nor swim the strait between her and home, nor dip foot into sea, nor be so much as sprinkled with its water. Else would she enter into the power of the Monster who lurked therein, and she should be devoured. Thus was she indeed captive, chained chainlessly, and close fastened by a Fear better than any bolts."

His voice softened, and then grew solemn.

"And lo! the sea wooed her, and most, when the sun bestrode mid-heaven. Then lay the waters clear incredibly and flawless; clearer than air they lay, and to each thing beneath them gave they a light, as it were, within itself, and it shone, and was distinct and separate for very brightness. And he saw in his vision how the very pebbles had, as it were, veiled lamps within them, golden and amber and ruby and purple-red, and how the weeds waved like the glorious tresses of sea-nymphs, a sparkling green, a fiery gold, wan with the tender hues of doves, and

drenched with the sea-purple. The fish, golden and blue and grey, shot to and fro, or hung motionless, the light glinting from their myriad scales, and bubbling into silver from each web and spine and filament. And above all, sea-flowers lived down there in the cool lagoons and under the curve of rocks, brief flowers, starry on no fragile stem, but innumerable with waving, swaying fingers, forests of talkative, restless fingers, golden and pearl, grey and copper-colour : dim green and purple, and every hue of wine, tawny and russet and crimson; and the colours of pomegranates and of the ripening fig. And of the shells, who should tell their delicacy and their tint? Fairer were they than cyclamen and iris, fairer than the myriad-tendrilled clematis. Yes, for the sake of the shells and the sea-flowers, she learnt to sicken of the roses and narcissus and anemones of the land—for the sake of the scentless, pulpy flowers beneath the water, cold flowers, that none might pluck nor weave; for the sake of the spined and brittle shells, she loathed the ivy and verbena, and the mossy violet. And with the fishes she was not too eager to have play, but with the Nereids and the Tritons whom she dreamt of, in the silver and purple palaces of the sea, and almost she sinned her mother's sin, and avowed herself a fit companion, an equal, of the god-born, so gleaming pale was she, and so would the waves have lapped her limbs about and lit them with new loveliness. And she despised the honest fisher-folk, that were scorched and sunburnt and ocean-bruised and buffeted ; and yet she envied them, when on tossing skiff they left the land and danced on the tides: and she held separate, too, from their children, the little children who ran on the firm sand where the water splashed their ankles, and in the hot

pools of the rocks they felt tiny crabs, yellow-grey, transparent race on their tingling skin."

"Alas, Euripides," smiled the lad. "But are you not incorrigible? Here is no tragedy; here is no plot nor climax. Here no will of God is interwoven and tugs with the wit of man. This is but pretty talk of flowers and fish, and Aristophanes will laugh more sweetly than ever upon you, and twirl mocking music at you in some comedy called the *The Marketers.*"

"There is a climax," said the poet, gravely, but with eyes still glowing: "and there is a divine mystery. Andromeda had never seen the Monster; nor had the fisher-folk seen it. What if it were but a lie?

"So in the dawn, when the sun rose, and all the sea was trembling gold, soon she could not believe that within that blaze of splendour dwelt anything black or foul, so strong and free were the great waters, and so leapt they in delight against the brisk breeze of morning, cresting each golden ripple with sheer fire. And at night, when the moon hung full, and the dark sea quivered into a silver road, she felt that in all safety she might speed over the surface nor ever sink, so clean and pure was the path. Fearless in the triumphant dawn, trustful and tender in the night, at noontide she gazed wearily upon the sea and knew for certain that it held no secret whether of good or ill. For from the cliff crest she could peer deep into the transparent waves, and there could see the weeds and the shoals of fish and the rocks. And one rock she could see, sprawling and thrusting out strange limbs that seemed to writhe below the slow-moving mass of water; sea-weeds waved upon it like human tresses; sea-flowers made for it a blossoming flesh, soft and succulent; here, it shone, like

great eyes rocked by the tides into half-wakeful slumber: there, shadowed hollows seemed to her like mouth and throat, and jagged splinters stood pointed for her like a bird's beak. And the rock, that looked like life, so swayed it beneath the swaying seas, was surely (so she would firmly hold) naught save some trick of nature, misunderstood, spoken of awry, emptily threatened, the inert semblance which had given birth to the legend of the Monster.

"Yet never set she her foot in the water. But at times, in her despite, storms blew the spray inland, and flecks of foam drifted on to her, and she thrilled answeringly in her soul, and was aware that somewhat yet there was . . . Some unknown lips had brushed her forehead—she was for yielding, and the verge drew her. It drew her, yet entered she not in, not to the ankle's depth, fearing what she longed for, and she envied the children who played there so lightly. But, Kallaischros, what she knew not at all was, the divine star-like thing that still shone in her sorrowful and yearning eye; it was dimmed when she felt safe, and mocked at the weed-clad reef, and it burned, though with sinister flame, when she craved tc know the sea, and it never, never might peer from the blithe children's countenance, but all their lives through they were like to pass unseeing, and in some sort undestined."

"You love, Euripides, to tell of the unenvied fate of woman, how she languishes apart, feeding her body upon sweet daintiness, and her thought upon ancient tales of her immemorial loveliness and spell, of man's audacity, and of the sins of gods. I am weary of your tearful, cheated Kreousas, your lamentable Helens, yes, and your stark-souled Medea, and the virgin of Aulis and of Tauri. But worst, are your sick-souled Phaidras."

"The whole world is sick," he answered, dispirited. "Men in their thought, and women in their flesh, and I, I am not sufficient for these things."

"Not all despair like you, dear master. Dare I make mention of——"

"Ah," he interrupted, "there was Aischylos. He saw the injustice and the infatuation, and the sin. But he could look farther. His soul was of fire, even as his body was of oak and iron. He had fought at Marathon: he was a part of that great day of Salamis when Hellas was reborn into a new age, and I, I, on that very day was but born, with all my waking life in the new age, but all the roots of my soul plunging in the past. Conceived in the days of honour and poverty and strife; alive in those of wealth and empire and lies. No wonder I am all awry. Two souls are in me."

"But Sophokles. He was but a lad still, when he led the triumph dance for Salamis. Sophokles, too, is of a double age."

"Ah, Sophokles! But look; he cannot suffer. He sees disaster, and curse, and folly; but his serene and crystal aether no storms can stir. He sees the suffering, untroubled. *I*—I see, and suffer for the sufferers more than they do for themselves. What is this, that men should have suffering, nor know themselves or it, and that I, knowing them, should know it too, and in my one self support it? Ah, *that* is when I sing . . . when Suffering is too fiery for me, and when Beauty is too beautiful."

"And Andromeda?" the slave resumed after a space.

"How can I tell? Yet one thing is certain, that after no long time she would have been seized with love for the Monster."

"For the sea-monster?" he answered horrified. "With love? A new Pasiphaë . . .?"

"If you will. Sooner or later the sick soul craves for what most it fears and hungers for what it hates. So too the delicate soul that has drunk too deep of Beauty comes to ask only for the strong, the hard; nay, for the brutal, the cruel, and the hideous.

"So, on a day, she will grow faint with loneliness (for who will marry her?) and wild to have done with the whole tale, once and for all. Better to fling herself to the Beast, and know its kiss, than this gradual making void of all herself. And at the thought that this oblation might be possible, it became desirable; she courted it, half self-confessed; she trod the shore; she grew eager, then terrified again; she called, but furtively; she offered herself to chance. . . ." Inspiration reached Euripides once more. He rose.

"On a day of heavy heat and thunder—you know, Kallaischros, how, on such days, the blood flows differently, and the soul cannot retain nor fixedly behold its own images and forebodings? On such a day she shall pace the livid beach, and the wan waters shall touch her. . . . And suddenly the surface heaved with slow ripples, and a surge and a swell came towards her, and a yellow froth smeared her; and dead fish fell forth beside her and the sea-flowers shrank and hid their loveliness within themselves, and clung, glassy domes of pulp, to the rocks. And already she was feeling that it was too late, that in a moment vast tentacles would shoot like the lash of an amorous whip, coiling in a sudden flame about her, and again, sliding with loathly sweetness round her limbs, ferociously to suck, on a sudden, great cups of scarlet flesh

out of the white. And to her breast would be pressed the horrible slime of its face; and again, she would stare into its cold eyes, and by its hooked beak her heart would be torn out. . . ."

"But now comes Perseus?" cried the slave. "Now, the Saviour-Hero, with the Gorgon's head to deliver her?"

"Now should come Perseus," mused he, and then cried with sudden agony: "Now *must* come Perseus! ah, poor Andromeda, now *must* thou have thy Perseus. Yet what shall bring him? What messenger shall summon him? What shall draw him down, golden like a flying star, across the sky, to succour thee? And, if indeed he be come—and lo, in the air an eddy, and a bright shadow, and the immortal Youth with wings tremulous at heel and sword splendid at his thigh; and Medusa's head —hark:

The Saviour-Hero high
Upheld the Head,
And bade Destruction die,
And Death he blasted dead:
A god's life through her flesh and soul and spirit sped.

"But alas! How shall the Head work such a change? Medusa froze into stone all she looked upon. Death can only slay. Who shall imagine a Death that shall work life? Here is a two-fold riddle, Kallaischros; I pray thee, solve it for me! Why shall the Hero come, thus opportune to the moment? And how shall that dead Thing breed life? The myth helps me no more: the God is leaving me. . . ."

"Why, Master! What is your scruple? In how many of your tragedies does not the God appear, from an opened heaven, when human succour fails, and no earlier?

That, surely, is the rôle for God! And Medusa gave life to the maiden by slaying the foul Monster, and making it indeed the reef she had thought it; though that part of your speech, Euripides, I understood not, nor will the Athenians understand."

"What brought the hero?" resumed the sad poet, disregarding the slave's talk. "What cry in her soul summoned him from beyond the stars? Was the sheer suffering enough? Is sheer misery, and despairing, doomed hopelessness so mighty a magnet that God himself cannot resist it . . .? But ah! when the Monster was dead, was it indeed well with her? If the Gaze of God should shrivel the roots of fear, shall it be well with the careless soul? The Monster is gone—a rock, a reef; Andromeda is freed; she can sin no more: no hell awaits her. But believe me, in the lakes of her eyes, so full of starlight once, is visible some reflection of that stoniness . . . somewhat of Death's death has surely become her own. The law holds, that Death and Life exclude, and utterly, each the other. . . . The tale finishes not."

"But you have spoken marvels, good master," he replied. "What more need you say? The tale is told. The tragedy is complete, and the prize is certain. Or at least——"

"It will gain no prizes," he answered. "But I well may finish it. I am too tired for more. His patron, Athené, shall appear. She shall bid him loose Andromeda, and shall foretell their marriage, their worship, their constellation, and the hero shall fly off, uplifted by the crane, with the maiden in his arms. At that, how will the young men laugh! But I am too tired even to weep, and it has grown cold."

THE NEW NARCISSUS

MR. MACKINTOSH was sitting in my room and was evidently very depressed.

"It's a hopeless job," said he. "I'd better send in my resignation."

"Oh, don't do that," I said. "What in particular is wrong?"

"I'm no good at shoving and barging, and my boys are an absolutely uninteresting lot. They simply don't *want* to learn."

"Who *does?*"

"You did."

"Oh no. I was as lazy as they made 'em. If anything interesting came along, it stuck. On the same principle, if I saw anything I liked, I ate it."

"But if you didn't see it, you went and looked for it. These boys don't. Yet anything's interesting if you only choose to *be* interested."

"Even these boys, then," said I, glad to catch him out.

He laughed.

"Well, anyhow—they've no feeling—no sense of beauty—of the splendour of words. Why aren't they romantic? why can't they guess something of—well, the mystery of things? You know Parker, in my class? Well, he had to translate, to-day, Aeneas's prayer to Venus, his mother: *Tuque o dubiis ne defice rebus, diva parens.* 'And thou, Mother Divine, in my hazardous fortunes abandon thou not me.' Most simple and pathetic. What

d'you suppose he said? 'Do thou, O divine parent and O doubtful lady——'"

But my chuckle interrupted him.

He smiled wanly.

"Ah! you can take it like that," said he. "I——"

But a loud knock at the door interrupted him.

"Come in," I called. "Don't move, Mr. Mackintosh."

The door opened and three large boys appeared and stood on the threshold. Not quite the largest, I confess, not the very serene gentlemen from the Upper Sixth, but —well, large and masterful in life.

"We've been most horribly told off," one of them began, "and we thought we'd bunk up here and see you. Oh." For he had caught sight of Mr. Mackintosh.

"Never mind. Come in," I said. "What have you been told off about?"

"Chucking soap at the Boozies," he answered.

Now the Boozies are the *Buzophagi Pterorhynchi*, a pair of melancholy fowls like small and sodden ostriches which lead a persecuted life in an enclosure called the Bishop's Garth—presumably because it is not a garden and no Bishop ever goes there. The windows of one wing of the college look into it, and in that wing the largest and the *next* largest have their rooms.

"And Rodney threw his football shorts over one——"

"Oh you liar," said Rodney, without the slightest hesitation.

"Well," rejoined the other, "they were your shorts. I forget who threw them. Anyhow, the female Boozy got entangled in them and set up the most horrible squealing, and Mr. Jones came along and nicked us. So we got told off and bunked up here."

"I've got some sweets young Billy Rogers presented me with this morning," I said. "They look exceptionally nasty, so perhaps you'll accept them. If you still condescend to sweets."

They proceeded to eat.

"Sir," said Barnard, who had spoken first, "why do we call them Boozies?"

"Because their real name is Buzophagi Pterorhynchi."

"Gee!" said he. "What's it mean?"

"What should you say, Mr. Mackintosh?" I asked.

"Feather-snouted live-ox-eaters, I expect," he answered.

"Why are they called that?" he continued. "Birds can't eat live oxen."

"Oh yes they can," I said. "Don't you remember the Cyprus vase I showed you, with the bird spiking a charging bull in the middle of the forehead with its bill and ripping him up with its other claw?"

"Good Lord, sir! Is that really true?"

"No," said I.

"I wish you wouldn't fool," he growled. "But I say, I want to know what good it is having these birds and all these other aviary and menagerie collections? We don't know anything about 'em, and they get a most awfully rotten time of it."

"They broaden your mind. They buck you up and make you want to travel and see the world. Directly you see a Patagonian nightingale or Himalayan hedgehog, you want to go and get up all about Patagonia and the Himalayas in a dictionary."

"I *don't* think."

"Very likely not," I replied; "but there's no reason why you shouldn't."

Mr. Mackintosh sighed.

"All the same," said Girdon, who hadn't spoken yet, "it would be topping to see those places. I hope I do, some day."

"Of course you will," I answered, "if you want to."

"But what's the good of seeing them?" went on Barnard.

"Well," I said, "you could hunt. Wouldn't you like to have a collection like Mr. Selous?"

"What's he?" said this shocking boy.

"You'll find pictures of his trophies in that *Strand*," I said. "Take it if you like, but bring it back. After supper."

"There's another thing I wanted to ask you," he went on.

"No, that's my thing," Rodney interrupted. "I told you ages ago I'd ask him. You aren't going to bag it."

"Well, ask," I said.

"Well, in my opinion, there's a lot too much swank about the Church." He paused, to see if I'd be shocked. He then took breath and started again. "I call it swank to go giving orders, like 'If you don't have two candles lighted, you can't say mass'; 'If you eat meat and fish at one meal on Fridays in Lent, or whatever it is, you've got to say so next time you go . . .' And look at the Psalms. What's the good of saying, 'Let's put wood in his bread,' and 'Why are the mountains hopping about?' and so on? It's all swank. Why can't one pray sensibly for the Pope, or for a victory, or something?"

"And why couldn't they have gas?" resumed Barnard. "What's the particular point of candles? Gas gives a much better light."

"O philosopher," I answered, "you ask a lot of questions in one breath. What you want to know, A. K. Rodney, is, What's the good of Symbolism ; and you, Tim, What's the use of anything not useful ?"

"Well, I should think so," he ejaculated.

"You don't half realize," said I, looking at him sideways, "the value of the Beautiful Useless."

He puffed with laughter.

"Oh," he cried. "Oh, you've supplied me with a phrase ! I shall always call him that—You don't know——"

"*Don't* I?" I returned. "But peace ! Look here, A. K., I meant what I said about the birds and so on giving you the chance of a wider view and setting your imagination going. Even stamps do."

"Oh yes," he said, "I quite see that."

"Well, symbols make you go—*deeper*. They show you there's something below the surface. See ? It's better to be wide than narrow, and to be deep and not superficial."

"Yes," said he politely.

"Well, take an easier example. Latin and the Psalms. It's the oddest thing in the world, you know, that *you* should be singing *Psalms* in *Latin*. Latin isn't your language, and the Psalms aren't the sort of thing you'd sing if you were left to yourself. You're linking yourself up with no end of history, and nations and ideas, and getting into other people's lives."

"Sorry I don't see it," he said.

"Yes, you are, you know ! It'd be a bit easier, I confess, if people told you a little more *about* the Psalms, and the Jews, and Church History, and all that, but——"

"Oh Lord, Church History . . ." he murmured.

"All history's as exciting as a novel," said I rather priggishly. "Especially Church History. But I assure you, it's the oddest thing in the world to find out why you're doing what you *are* doing. You *wouldn't* be singing those Psalms if the Church was willing to chuck away all her past, and forget King David and everything else between him and us. But she hasn't, and so here are you singing songs three thousand years old; and you *might*, if you thought a bit, or were helped to think about this particular thing, notice that your ideas profess to be descended from King David's all that long way off."

Girdon here created such an impression of being about to speak, and, in fact, of *having* spoken, that I turned round to look at him. But the ungainly boy was sitting bolt upright, knees together, feet wide apart, and looking most uncomfortable. But *he* at least was thinking, or feeling thought trying to think itself. The very bones of his mind, so to say, were cracking and at strain.

"So to start with," I said, "all these things have a halo of antiquity about them——"

"Gee!" murmured Jacky Barnard once more.

"I repeat," said I defiantly, "a halo of antiquity. All old things are beautiful."

"Mr. Pooh-bah isn't," he remarked.

Now Mr. Pooh-bah was one of the oldest and most assiduous visitors to our college, and it was true that he was not beautiful. So I paid no attention.

"I meant of course—oh, abbeys, and castles, and old gardens, and towns. You wouldn't blow 'em all up, would you, and build trim villas and Garden Cities everywhere?"

"I would," he said boldly.

But I saw that this conversation had reached its natural end. Moreover, Mr. Mackintosh rose to go, and the boys began to talk about local gossip. When they in their turn went, Girdon lingered.

"You haven't set me an essay," he reminded me.

"What'd you like to do?" I asked.

"Oh, nothing political or up to date, or anything that wants facts," he said. "I'm sick of sweating up facts. Besides—oh I don't know; give me something out of the way. I believe I'll write a topping essay this week. I feel like it."

"You're reading Herodotus, aren't you?" The talk about travel and inquisitiveness sent my mind round to the garrulous old Halikarnassian.

"That's right."

"Well—er—write an essay on, Why Herodotus never mentions the Sphinx."

"Why *what?* Why——? Well, but *I* don't know. How should I?"

"Nobody knows! It's the oddest thing in the world! Here was a man of insatiable curiosity, out to see all he could and note it down, *proud* to know the last word about everything, and with a very good eye for the effective, who tells us yards about the Pyramids and not one word about the Sphinx alongside. And yet, the Sphinx! There's not a modern who isn't perfectly drunk with its mysteriousness if he lets himself go a little. And even to the dullest it *must* mean something—its great Head with wide-open eyes, looking out over the sand through more years than you can imagine. . . . Think of all it's seen! Yet Herodotus never says a word. D'you think that he was frightened?"

He looked at me curiously.

"I'll tell you a thing," he said. "I've always thought of Herodotus as a *book*, so far. I believe, now, I shall shortly *have* to think of him as a funny old man, pottering about taking notes."

I laughed.

"He had depths, though." And I told him a little about his doctrine of the Grudge of God. "The Egyptians called the Greeks 'children ever'; but children may be very impressionable."

I showed him a few photographs of Egypt, and off he went.

Within a week he came back again.

He sat down, essay in hand, on the very edge of a chair, and stared at the corner of the coal-scuttle.

"I'm afraid I've made an awful fool of myself," he announced.

"Who've you had a row with?" I began, entirely off the track.

"Oh!" said he, quite wide-awake at once. "Not that this time. But—er—well, I've—tried to write my essay in Herodotean style," he said, with a rush.

"Excellent idea," I said, sincerely.

"But that's not the worst," he said, down again.

"Well?" said I.

"Well—I'd been thinking about what you'd been saying about looking about and sort of probing into the past and raking up all sorts of problems everywhere. Well, suppose you couldn't solve them? Wouldn't it be awful? Getting frightfully keen on knowing all about all sorts of things, and never getting to the bottom of them. Constantly coming up against blank walls, you

know. I'd almost want to shoot myself. It would grow on you like gambling. You'd *have* to keep on at it, and you *couldn't* get forward. Like a nightmare. Well, I imagine Herodotus something like that. Anyhow——" and he flung out an arm in quite a commanding gesture: "You listen."

And he began to read.

"'Now connected with the Pyramids are very many other things worthy of mention and also the so-called Sphinx, having its shape as follows: A couching lion is figured man-headed. Now this Sphinx as it seems to me was called Sphinx by the Greeks not rightly indeed but through ignorance and is not the same as the Sphinx of Thebes but different. For having another name in Egyptian concerning which there is a certain sacred tale, which, knowing it, I will not narrate, for it were not righteous, it is other too in form, for who could deny that one thing is the male head even without a beard (but the Sphinx has a beard), and another thing the female head? The Sphinx at Thebes therefore had a female head, when Oedipus slew it, and a lion's body, though I do not myself accept this tale but believe it to have been a dragon. For that dragons have hair like women who is ignorant? and Oedipus in his perturbation erred, and erred have his logographers; but, telling that his Sphinx had a woman's head, I speak not from myself, but tell the told, and about Oedipus therefore let so much have been said. To me therefore visiting the Sphinx in Egypt, it happened that a strange thing occurred: Having looked upon it I could not forget it. Therefore when I was questioning the priests and storing their several responses in my tablets, it kept rising up that I should interrogate the Sphinx, as destined to

answer me all that was on each occasion asked. Yes, and often would I travel out as far as that divine Monster, but from its wide forehead and blank eyes that stared above my head fell ever a contempt and a silence, and a certain shuddering got hold upon me, bidding me not disturb its contemplation. And in some manner I perceived myself aware that what it contemplated was all that Is, and that that which Seems hindered is not one whit. And to me it appeared that my fit knowledge was of that which Seems, and that to that which Is I ought to bid a long farewell.' "

"This," I interrupted, "is very much more Plato than Herodotus."

He shook his shoulders impatiently and proceeded.

"'Now on a night, having been invited nor by any means having refused, I supped with a certain priest, and perchance having drunk more than what was suitable of the special drink of the Egyptians (but about this drink being made from barley and able to render enthusiastic as much as any, I have spoken in my earlier words, and about the drink therefore I forthwith check myself) and having music whistling in my ears by reason of the drums and harps and the female-flute, for playing a mono-rhythmic music they do so fill the ears that the soul itself cannot rinse out the sound, I went forth insolently towards the Pyramids, being infatuated, and upon the infatuated the gods send doom.' "

"Aeschylus, this time," I murmured.

"Oh do shut up," he cried petulantly, and then apologized, saying he was sorry, but he hadn't tried before and couldn't get it all right the first time. "Besides," said he, "I've chucked Herodotus here. It interfered with me." He proceeded.

"'Therefore I went on, laughing and singing by myself, across the sands, and there was a moon, and the Pyramids were, on the one side black, and a misty golden on the other, against the sky. And though I sang, the drums were beating all the while underneath my song, in my head.'—If that sounds rot," he interpolated, "I remember it's what I felt once at the Franco-British, in the Algerian part. Whatever else went on afterwards, I always sort of felt the drums and flutes coming through it. Rotten. Or rather decent, in a way. I don't know. Well—— 'And before the Sphinx I stood, legs astride, my hands on my hips, and I looked in its face and questioned it, and it stared out above my head. And I went mad with its inattentiveness, and I shouted out questions about life, and women, and God, and death, and it would not answer me, but the moon looked at me. And I was determined to get some answer from the Sphinx, and I ran down the steps to the temple between its paws, and I ran up the staircase in the paw, and then up the little steps cut in the shoulder, in order to get at its face. I knew it was impiety, for one not a priest, nor a servant of a priest; still, I went, resolved on an answer. But even so, I could not climb round to look right into its eyes, but I saw it sideways, staring out to nowhere. And I shouted more questions, and then—suddenly I saw that its face was not even alive—it was not just deaf, but dead; just stones and bricks and paint. And I was sobered in a moment, and I descended forthwith, and I walked away with my back to that dead Beast, knowing the Grudge of God, and that I should never have an answer, and that I should never ask again.'—Now," said he, "Here's the part!—'But before I was gone a furlong

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I stood still. I did not hear a sound, nor saw I anything. But the silence tingled, and the moon was looking, but not at me, but behind me. I knew It was coming, though I knew it had not stirred. Like a cat's velvety paw, padding inaudibly over the sand, its footsteps came: I knew it was close behind me, and that it would pounce. The enormous paw was high in the air, and blotted out the sky. It fell; yes, one paw fell upon my shoulder, and the other drove its claws into my skull. And since then it holds me as a cat holds a mouse, and lets me run away, and plucks me back, and forces me ever to look into its dead eyes—for it couches dead again—and ask it questions which I know it will never answer.'—There you are," he said, "a sort of mixture of Hichens and Wilde and Algernon Blackwood."

"That certainly would be a mixture," said I. "I'd no idea you read all that. We shall have you"—for I felt the theme at least a little bit unhealthy—"writing more *Borrowed Plumes* for *Punch!* You've got the Herodotus touch quite remarkably well, in places."

"Oh, hang Herodotus," he said. "But isn't the idea rather horrible? Nature giving you all sorts of problems and refusing to solve them. What's one to do?"

"'Grow old along with me,'" I murmured.

"You're always pretending you're frightfully old," he said. "You can't be so very. I don't suppose you're forty."

"Oh," said I, "it was only a quotation. Some day we'll read some Browning together. I didn't know you were a bit of a poet. . . . But the point is, attend to your conscience inside, and the outside problems solve themselves. Only, directly one's solved, you see a further one."

He sighed portentously.

"When you said something the other day about our thoughts being descended from other peoples'," he said, "something seemed to crumple up in my head like an egg-shell, and then something else went off like fireworks. I feel as if I were going to look at everything quite differently in the future."

"Well——" I began, but a knock came, and the other two entered.

"Good evening, sir," they said in one breath. Then they saw Girdon. "Hullo, you there, Gugu?" (This was Barnard talking.) "He's been slacking most horribly, sir; can't get a word out of him, this week. Now *we*'ve bucked up no end. Been going about seeing symbols in everything. Gee."

"We think Mr. Mackintosh is most awfully symbolic," said Rodney.

"Really? what of?"

"Ah, that's what one can't find out. Deep, Mr. Mackintosh is. You go into his class expecting to get it all your own way, and he says something you haven't the slightest idea what he's driving at by, and out you go before you know where you are, simply."

I digested this in silence.

"Not but what what you said has got something in it. We bagged a book called Holy Week Services, and we've been stewing 'em up on our own, and it isn't half bad. Tells you all about why you do the different things. Blowing on the font and all that. Always makes the chaps laugh, sir, that part. Still, it's a quaint notion. I'll keep my eyes opener, this time."

"That's all right," said I, "you do that. And you

might write an essay this week on Comparative Rates of Usury under Perikles, Peisistratos, and Solon, will you?"

"Oh *sir!*" they howled.

"You've been overdoing symbols a bit," I said. "You want a little fact. We'll be having you saying your picture post-card gallery is symbolic of Abstract Virtue, Tim, if I don't look out, and then I sha'n't be able to criticize it."

Timothy turned pink and Rodney cheered.

"Awful rot, all that, sir, what? Catch me putting up frights like that. Got no use for music halls."

"*Any*how," I resumed, "just listen to what Girdon's going to write about, and see if you prefer it. You, *mon cher*, have to write out in your own words the myth of Narcissus"—for I had an idea.

"Never heard of him," said Girdon.

"Narcissus," said I, standing in front of the fire, "was the son of a River-god, and with him Echo, a most beautiful nymph, was very much in love."

"*Some* nymph," interpolated Barnard.

"Echo," said I severely, "for annoying Heré was punished in the following manner. Whenever anyone else was speaking, she couldn't help talking too, but she couldn't say anything in the least original, but only repeated the last word of the person speaking."

"Snubbed," said Rodney to Barnard, who instantly kicked him underneath the table.

"Else," said I to Rodney, "she couldn't talk at all."

Rodney opened his mouth for a retort, found none, and collapsed.

"You see?" said I. "To resume. Narcissus on re-

jecting her affection was in his turn punished by the offended Aphrodite, and fell in love with himself, a practice imitated by very many young men of parts, from his time to our own. Wherefore he sat gazing on his own face reflected in a pool of water till he fell in and was drowned. Now in what style shall you write that, Gugu? Have we ever read any of the Homeric Hymns together?"

"No, sir," he said.

"Well," said I, "try Theokritos. I know we've done one or two of his idylls. Try that sort of thing. See if it'll go into Greek verses first. If it won't, do it like your last essay."

"I say, Gugu, show us your last essay," they exclaimed. He refused, and a scrimmage appeared imminent; but peace being restored I proceeded to the public reading out of theirs, which chastened their high ardour.

A week afterwards Girdon swung defiantly, I thought, into my room.

"Here's this rot," he said, "but I can't possibly read it."

"As you like," said I.

He scowled and sat down abruptly, turned his back on me, and started reading:

"'Silent is the noon, and the stone-pine stirs not, and the plane-tree whispers not, nor talks the laurel, for the winds are laid; the wild vine sleeps in the noon-tide, and Pan amid the grasses of the rocks pipes not at all, and the grass is standing silent. Stoop, O Narcissus, stoop! Gaze upon the pool, for the pool is still.'"

"Good heavens," I said to myself.

"'Yea, now the flower-fed bee goes booming no more forth; now sings no gnat, now sails no sudden butterfly; yea, silent is that chatterer, the shrill cricket, in the

flaming heat; even the dark fountain, dripping high 'neath yellow-flowering ivy in the mountain, hushes its stainless water and the pool lies still. Stoop, O Narcissus, stoop! Gaze in the pool, gaze, for the pool is still.

"'O Pan, why runneth not thy supple lip over the wax-linked reeds? why pulseth not the rhythm of thy wailing poured around the poplars till they tremble, pouring round his enchanted eyelids till drowsiness do loosen them, till his eyes swim beneath thy fatal kiss?' 'I fear lest by any song I trouble him that stoopeth over the pool, that stoopeth there at gaze. Gaze thou, Narcissus, in the pool, gaze deep, for it lies still.'

"'O yellow iris and you myriad-fronded ferns! O tender parsley-ferns and hyacinth and you white violets, why wreathe ye not a wreath for the forehead of the flower-named Narcissus? Delicate wild-rose, why hang your petals motionless, unshed, that like the fragrant evening breeze should float around his hair? Clearer than morning stars are his eyes unclouded with his hair, but I see them not, for his head droops on his neck, and I but guess them, shining like Hesperus, the star of evening, from beneath veils of water. Gaze, starry-eyed Narcissus; now sleeps the violet sea, and the rivers running amber above the pebbles. Gaze, for the pool is still.'

"Now it's Narcissus talking:

"'Yesterday I went to the mountains, and among the high rocks I called aloud, seeking to know whether by scaling them I might ascend Olympus and find the crystal air in the lonely light of heaven, did I but climb the rocks and conquer the cold snow, and "Where is the path?" called I. "O mountains, tell me of the path, where is it?" And the mountains spoke, "Where is it?"

Thus questioned I the rocks, and with my own voice they answered me.

"'And on another yesterday unto the sea I turned, the hyacinthine sea, and to the sea called I, "O sea, if sailing on thy trackless plains, I shall reach happy islands, swiftly to a white-pinioned boat shall I betake me, and with dark keel cleave the purple water, and the waves shall sing behind me as I pass. Where are there Happy Islands?" And the sea made answer with my voice, replying, "Are there Happy Islands?" Thus with my voice, my own voice, the mocking sea made answer.

"'And I left the bluff headlands where the shrines stand with salt-crusted columns, and I left the lonely mountains, and I sought farms and homesteads, and calling from afar to the reed-thatched cottages wherein men sat and mothers and the tiny children, on beds of broom and heather, cooking the chestnuts over the red fire, and I did call again, "Oh, if to you I come, shall I with you find happiness?" And my own voice, but empty and most thin, as of unwitting ghosts, came sighing back to me: "Find happiness?" and yet more doubtful, "Happiness?"'

"But here," said he, "I can't go on. Obviously he's got to go to the market-place and the town and so on, and knock up against all sorts of people, and get nothing but his own words back. Still, equally obviously he wouldn't; they *wouldn't* just echo his words; even in the farm-houses, if he'd gone up and knocked and opened the door, they'd have said, 'Come right in, O stranger, and have some chestnuts.'"

"Well," I said, "if you keep on any time at it, you'll find that what you get from your fellow men, even, is largely what you put there. In fact, you colour all you

look at, if you're as self-conscious as your Narcissus. You can be lonely in a crowd, not only because they're all so different from you, but because they're all so dismally like you; what you've seen in yourself, you re-find in them, and you peer back out of their eyes into your own. But he doesn't finish in the market-place, does he?"

"No," he said, slewing himself round in his chair. "He sort of sets his teeth and says, 'All right, if I can't find anything *but* myself, I'll jolly well be contented *with* myself,' and he sort of falls in love with himself and sits staring at his image, and *then*—here's the point—whenever he tries *to* be satisfied, he just *can't*, and the symbol for that is, that he stoops and tries to kiss his own reflection and it all breaks up, of course, and vanishes. But I can't see how to say it."

"No," I said, "very likely not. But you know, young man, you rather take my breath away."

"Oh," he said, "I got a lot of the words out of the Greek Anthology. The crib; *you* know."

"Yes," I answered. "But the words aren't everything."

"They're a good deal," he said. "I can't find any for the last part, and so I can't do it."

"'Fancies that broke through language and escaped,'" I quoted. "Oh, decidedly you and I must read *Rabbi Ben Ezra*. Never mind. Struggle along stammering, and sooner or later the thought'll come to its birth."

"But meanwhile it hurts."

"Quite so."

"But I mean it. I mean, suppose I get not satisfaction from looking outside, and none from looking inside, where *am* I to look?"

"If it's not too much of a tangent, and not too indiscreet, do you go to Communion much?"

"I thought you'd ask me that, somehow. Yes, I do. Not that I see it does me much good."

"Well—keep it up. Collect experience; watch your conscience; and go to Communion. That'll carry you along. But I see that we've hardly begun to talk, you and I, yet."

"Oh lor."

"Oh, no more to-night! Quite enough for once! Here's a verse you'll like:

> But note, when evening shuts,
> A certain moment cuts
> The deed off, calls the glory from the grey:
> A whisper from the west
> Shoots: "Add this to the rest;
> Take it and try its worth: here dies another day."

Exquisite, isn't it? But to-morrow is bound to follow, and to-morrow you'll find yourself forrarder in all those three departments."

"Which?"

"Body, mind, and spirit. Meanwhile, goodnight, dear sir."

But next day Mr. Mackintosh reappeared.

"I really shall have," he repeated, "to send in my resignation."

"Oh, don't say that," said I, "something'll probably turn up to buck you up."

He grunted.

PHILIPPIDES

. . . ἀποπέμπουσι ἐς Σπάρτην κήρυκα Φιλιππίδην Ἀθηναῖον μὲν ἄνδρα, ἄλλως δὲ ἡμεροδρόμην τε καὶ τοῦτο μελετῶντα . . .—Herodotus, Z. 105.[1]

NOW it was late summer, and the evening brooded heavily upon the waters, when the watchers over Stiria first saw the ships from Persia drift lazily down the horizon. Violet-dark were the heavens overhead, and violet-dark the sea, and very calm. In the heavens was no cloud, but a mist filled all the air, and the splendid sun was veiled in his setting; and the rocks and islands, Keos and Andros, and the westward cliffs of Euboia, and the tall Persian galleys, with their scarlet sails and painted poops and drooping pennons, shone with a tempered gold, a glowing tawny, a shadowy purple. Tawny and golden, the huge ships heaved out of the violet; for a space they had hovered, while the afternoon was brighter, round the harbour of Karystos; there they had shone, golden stars against the blue, and had passed into the great bay, and had come forth again. Then they had breasted the Euripos unruffled by any breeze, and, as the sun sank, they vanished northward. But, in the night, a flock of frightened fishing-boats drove down upon Attika; to Stiria and to Prasiai they came, and told how, through the darkness, they had caught the flare of the wide-blazing vineyards and olive-woods of Karystos evil-fated; and but few days after this into Athens herself

[1] . . . They despatched to Sparta, as herald, a certain Philippides an Athenian, and an all-day runner by profession.

the runners came, telling how Eretria was taken; Eretria, her sister, her comrade-town, who with her had sent the ships, the origin of ills, to fight against the Medes and had burnt Sardis; Eretria, who, on hearing of this Persian fleet of vengeance, that it was even now upon its way, had begged from Athens and had received her promise of assistance. Eretria had fallen and had seen her temples burned and her folk carried captive away. To-day, Eretria; to-morrow, Athens knew, was for herself.

On the Akropolis the temples were loud with prayer; the doleful shrines smoked down the whole city with sacrificial fat; the anxious Council looked this way and looked that for help; to Sparta, it was resolved, a runner should run and seek help, according to the compact.

Of those whose profession was all-day running, Philippides ran swiftest. For him the Council sent, and to him entrusted its message.

And Kallimachos, the Polemarch, spoke to him, asking him whether he might hope, on the third day, to have carried the news to Sparta.

And he boasted, and cried among them all:

"Kallimachos, and you men of Athens, on the second day I shall have reached Sparta and have given the message: such a man am I with my feet to run and to arrive."

And they said, looking upon one another.

"Nay, but scarcely with God's help should one, running for two days only, finish such a path; one that were a mortal only, not a god whose goings are swift, hence thither, and no man marketh him."

And he made boasting answer among them, and cried:

"With my own strength and my leaping limbs beneath will I do this thing, and not at all with God's."

And in silence they looked each man on his neighbour.

But then they stripped him of his raiment, and mightily each man wondered at his strength ; such firm limbs and such shoulders did he show from beneath his tunic. And they anointed him well with oil, and he ate, and slept a little, and very early in the morning he set forth, running, from the grey city.

And as he ran he exulted within himself, and laughed because Eretria had, on a sudden and by treachery, been captured, and that sudden stress had come upon the Athenians, and that the need was sore for swiftness. And he perceived himself to be the one, the onliest one, of all the other citizens, who might be given this office of speed ; and he saw himself to be, as it were, some king within his town and pre-eminent over his fellows and destined to cull an unfading light of glory and a name imperishable.

So therefore he ran, very quietly, by the Sacred Way, through the wide wood of olives that extends beside Kephissos, but the channels were white and dusty. And then he climbed, gently at first, then steeplier, up the slopes and sides of Aigaleos, among stones and thistles. And then, at the saddle of the pass, in the gate, he turned, and behold, Athens, a shadowy hill with gleaming temples, almost swallowed up in the dazzling eastern glory. And before he turned again to follow the curving road and the descent, his heart leapt within his breast, and he knew himself citizen of a divine city, and he held up his hands to Athene, and he returned to run.

And he, he ran, and behold, before him the sea-blue gulf, ruffled by the early wind, clasped about like a lake, with shadowy Salamis to the south and, before his feet,

still his own Attika, and beyond, westwards, the mountains of Megara and the great rampart of Kithairon.

And still he went, having saluted, as he passed him, Apollo, and again, as he descended into the plain, the seaward Aphrodite. And running ever between hills and seas, he crossed the bubbling brooks of Rheitoi, where the fish, that none but the priests from Eleusis, already white and golden yonder, might take, were leaping and flying from the surface, scattering a rain of crystals against the sunlight. And over the Thriasian plain, parched here and marshy there, he sped, and the wind whistled in the reeds.

Now Eleusis he must needs pass by without loitering, else had he felt fain to do some homage to the Earth-mother and the Maiden for Whom he had awe, though he was uninitiate. And he thought of the days when the Athenians trooped out to celebrate the Mysteries in that demesne of the Goddesses, and again he returned to look in his mind upon this divine city of Athene; and, in the sacred festival of All Athens, he saw himself joining in the great procession, and his whole soul worshipped. And he thought tenderly of Peisistratos, the tyrant, whom his father had seen, who had renewed the glory of that festival, and he knew not that his grey son, Hippias, was even now upon the Persian ship and sailing down to Marathon ; and even had he known, the vision that was dawning in his spirit of an Athens of pride already ancient and of splendid, storied growth would not have faded. So kind to him was, even now, the will of the immortal gods. Therefore Eleusis he crossed, saluting the place of mysteries with his hand only, and behold, the Sacred Way was finished, and through rising, sinking roads, across dim woods, and again round creeks and bays of dancing

blue, he sped to Megara. And ever on his left, Salamis kept him company, shadowy against the south in grey and violet, veiled always with the golden rain of slanting sunlight.

Now through the Megarian vines and figtrees he ran, saluting none and unsaluted, and outside the town itself, for even now the Megarians loved not those who had robbed them, scarce two men's lives ago, of Salamis; yet did he laugh, thinking of the tunic, woven by Megarian weavers, which hung right ready for him on its peg within his home, and he exulted to think of the triumph that should be his before he clad himself therewith once more. But he was not fated to put it on any more over his broad shoulders.

Now after Megara the ground rose swiftly, and lo, the Isthmus and the Skironian cliffs with the terrible track scarred dizzily across them, and behold, above, the sheer rock-face running smoothly upwards like a wall, and, below, the sheer rock-face sweeping horribly down into the sea. Along that track but a single beast might make sure-foot passage: behind the jutting crags robbers would often lurk and leap, and hurl the pillaged traveller to his doom below. Philippides glanced once into the yawning emptiness, to where the rocky teeth tore the sea into one sheet of seething surf: beyond, in the lovely water, with the sunlight prisoned in its green translucency, he could see fish, hanging in shoals, like shadows. And from above him, sea-birds started suddenly from holes in the rock, and swept past his face, screaming, with the hurricane in their feathers. And to the hero, Theseus, he made prayer:

"O hero Theseus, who in these rocks didst slay the robber Skiron, show thyself in mercy, lord; hail, be propitious.

"O hero Theseus, whom in our city of Athens men do worship daily more and more, leave me not, lord, unnoticed, unprotected.

"O King Theseus, thy bones lie in sea-girt Skyros, but all this is thy land of Attika that even beyond Salamis is seen: to it be propitious, O hero, and for its freedom speed thou my knees beneath me."

So prayed he, and rapidly the path sank downwards towards the flat of the Isthmus, and now he was running over a barren tract of grey soil and grey stones, and grey with dust were the slight pines that tufted it. And terribly in great clouds the dust arose and curtained the sky and killed its colour; and albeit the glaring noontide was now passed, the tall mountains before him drifted like spectres, faint and shifting, thinly grey and silver in the silvery air where the dust danced. And so he came to Schoinos, where the merchants' ships went on rollers over into the further sea of Korinth. And thus Philippides passed beyond the Isthmus into the Island of Pelops.

But ever as he went, the prayer he prayed to Theseus floated in his thoughts, and scarcely did he notice the road below Korinth and the villages and springs that he passed. The god carried his soul aloft on to the great mount of Akro-Korinth: on that gigantic crag he seemed to stand, and lo, to his eastward thought, beyond the slopes of Salamis, the coned Aigina and the long hills of Attika—Hymettos, Pentelikos, and Parnes. He had been told that through that crystal air, when the sun struck full, the white star of Athene's temple would shine, to one so looking, from its rock grim on the green plain.

"O Father-country!" he cried, even as he ran, seeing the lovely vision the easier for the swirling air of myriad

silvery grey about him. "O Father-country! for thee! for thee!" and lo, the reward and the glory disappeared for him; and as he peered forward from his fancied pinnacle of Akro-Korinth and turned towards Arkadia or to Argos, there it was ever new mountains he beheld, welcoming him, this time, even as Kithairon and Helikon and Hymettos and Gerania had speeded him. From mountain to mountain leapt his thought, and he saw himself now, one man, one living, racing man, one point of flesh and blood, between Attika behind him and Lakedaimon before, between one Greek world and a new world, waiting for him, yet it too Greek. Theseus speeded him, Herakles would greet him: "O Hellas," cried he at last, "O Pan-Hellas, lo me thy servant. Speed my knees beneath me, strengthen my limbs: grant me steadfast mind. O great gods of Greece, O Zeus all-seeing, Zeus of all voices, O Zeus beyond all earth and sea and æther, be propitious; lo me thy mortal servant."

Praying thus, he plunged into the table-lands of Argos. All the afternoon and early evening he laboured up and down the rocky road and descended, when it was already late, into the suffocating plain. The waning moon showed its misshapen face, heavily and copper-coloured, through the sluggish air. He was fain to pass beyond the town, for he yearned for solitude, being pre-occupied with his vision and unwilling to speak with men for whom his message was not. But beyond Argos the mountains again rose, stark and terrible, through which a man must pass into Arkadia, and there, though he dared not rest for long lest his muscles should set and fatigue enchain him, he resolved to halt. Hitherto, his halts had been but to scrape from his parched skin the crust of sweat and dust

and to knead his limbs cunningly and to stretch his body into positions unavailing to the runner, that thus the effort might be diffused and equalized and the harmony within himself restored.

Here, then, where the brook Erasinos made the whole air cool and fragrant, and a colonnade gave shelter, he meant to rest himself. Through the tall grove of poplar-trees he sought the fountain head: the white trunks glistened in the moonlight, the white leaves moved and ceased not, and whispered and thrilled the air. In the plane-trees the waters echoed rushingly: through the oleanders, through the willows and the mulberries they flowed with sudden laughter and with voices that spoke and answered. Impetuously the waters rushed, welling from a cave, bubbling from fissured rocks, tumbling in cascades from this side and from that. Above the spring Pan had his shrine: to Pan, the tired man prayed.

But by now the night had fully come over, and all the ways were darkened. And to Philippides, with a thousand voices, the night spoke; and with a thousand eyes the night gazed upon him, and around him the earth sent forth its fragrance and the waters their wonder. Wonderful were the waters and the wind, for from off the surface ever the invisible wind streamed upwards, waving among the poplar-trees, and the waters sopped in the mosses and the ferns and splashed over ledges in the rock and widened into pools and were alive and knew the man and drew him and initiated him. And he, not knowing it, crouched there awake, nor slept at all, but communed with the god of the place, even with Pan, at whose will the waters and the wind spoke and the eyes of things were opened, that they should look upon his servant and

he on them. And as he looked, first was it the sacred Panic that laid cold hands on him, and even as in fear a man sees and hears but cannot join this to that in thought, but yields to the blind impulse of his limbs and of his shrinking flesh, so he, hearing the voices, could not understand their language; and, aware of the hidden eyes, followed not their meaning, and on his head the hair stirred, and his skin crept upon him, and he thought to die. But the fear passed, and the nearer coming of the god healed him, and he stood upright upon his feet and began once more to run, though black was the night and the ways were wholly darkened.

And though he neither saw nor knew the ways, yet assuredly the ways knew him ever more certainly, and the road helped him, and the ancient stones spread flat places for his tread and the brambles of the passes drew back nor tore his skin, and the dew was like wine to his lips, and ever before his feet Pan made to shine a torch invisible. And at last, when in the very early dawn he was in the gorges of eternal Mount Parthenios above Tegea, the whole hill-side seemed to be running with him; the vanishing stars faded from their places only that they might leap forward above his head, a crown already, a triumph dance, a ringing chorus circling round about him; Pan at his side was running, Pan kept him company and outpassed him and, turning, gazed profoundly into his eyes, and spake and called him by his name. . . .

"Philippides," the deep voice called, "Philippides," and all the hills and the skies and the waving winds cried with him: "O Philippides, Philippides, why love not the Athenians Me? Why love they not Me, who of old have been most loving unto them, yea, and will be, in the

far years, most loving and most generous? Philippides, Philippides, speak thou to Athens, cry aloud to Athens, even as I cry now aloud to thee, that they should love Me, who am the All and that which is behind all, and in all, and through whom all is that doth exist."

And Philippides, still running, raised his hands to the god, nor had knowledge save to cry aloud God's name and to acknowledge the Presence and the Command and to speed the bravelier on his way.

And down into Tegea ran he, and through the long morning ran he southward, and up once more into hills, yet nothing marked he, musing on his message, nor knew he indeed how far was yet his way, for he spake to none, until he saw to his right the terrible wall of Mount Taÿgetos. Blue into the blue it towered, and its crown was a crown of snows, and at its feet lay Sparta. And cool through the fruit trees, golden with much fruit, lay the green-shadowed road, and green splashed the river Oinos under the ancient bridge, and green and purple the Eurotas; and now was the sun already hidden behind Taÿgetos, and purple was its wall and chilled its snows, but to his left the range of Parnon still was golden. And in the golden and green twilight ran he into Sparta, and his head was roaring with his weariness, and his breast was bound within the brazen bands of his long contest and panted to break through them and find relief.

And grim-faced men stood round Philippides and with broad and sounding tongues addressed him, speaking the ancient language with voices that he knew not. Still did he answer to the Spartans, and he uttered his message and spake:

"O Lakedaimonians, the Athenians beg you to help

them and not to disregard a city that is most ancient among the Greeks falling into slavery at the hands of men that are barbarians. For lo ! even now is Eretria enslaved, and by a city of rank hath Greece become the weaker."

For thus had they bidden him to speak.

And the Spartans looked upon him and marvelled to see such power of frame and stature in an Athenian, and wisely they nodded with their heads and thus would one man speak unto his neighbours:

"Not unworthy is the stranger to win his boon, so stalwart are his knees for running and his arms for throwing the long spear. Assuredly in three days and nights might such an one have carried news from Athens or even swiftlier, with fair chance and the gods propitious."

And he smiled and said: "Nay, but on the second day am I come."

And they laughed sweetly, looking upon one another, and they cried: "Knew we not well that light Athens is a home for many bubbling words and delightful lies? Yet do such not beseem grave men."

And he was instant and replied, and "Yea, by Pan," said he, "but having set forth very early at dawn of yesterday, I am here to-day at the setting of the sun."

Then did the Ephors, looking each askance at his fellows, make promise unto him that after the new moon they would send help to Athens. "For," said they, "it cometh on apace, and we shall not tarry. But before then, 'twere sin, and we send not."

And cunningly they kneaded his muscles and drew his arms up and pressed them down that his lungs might drink the air untiringly, and he ate, but a very little only, and he slept, nor at all for long, seeing that he must return, as fleet as God should will, with his answer to Athens.

And they bade him farewell, the grim young men with all goodwill, but some with envy, and all of them with amaze; and the old men with anger and with cunning in their heart; and the maidens, silently but with troubled spirits they watched him, so courteous was he in speech and so gentle to smile, and such an one as they had not known for brother or for spouse. Nay, nor himself, had they seen him on the dawn of yesterday, would they have recognised. For now the god shone through him.

And again, before the dawn, he returned by the same road, and behold it was very long. And the god hid himself, and the road ran not with him, and the hills between Sparta and Tegea were wholly unaware of him and spake no word. And when, after long toil, Parthenios showed itself, scorched into red heat by the westward sun, he hoped that to the sacred place of his epiphany Pan would return and show himself, and he prayed again and again: "O Pan," prayed he, "come cheerful, come serene; oh come propitious, be propitious to me, great God." But Pan came not, nor answered, nor was there any that did succour him. And again and again he looked wildly at the track and deemed he must have lost it, for it was other than when he first had come thereby, because he faced that wherefrom he had turned, as then he ran, and the shadows of the evening were other than the dawn, and also in the ecstasy of that running he had marked nothing of the road, and now he feared, and he fought, and he gazed wildly round, and he plunged on again, now with his chin down on to his burning chest, now with his head tossed back, eyes shut, hair glued with sweat to skull, elbows swinging and fists clenched. And he plunged into the lonely mountains, and the brambles

scourged him and the rocks made ragged teeth beneath him; and winds, and behold, a bitter and freezing rain smote him and he was like to have perished. Still he held on.

And in the dead of night it seemed to him that his soul was frozen for very loneliness, and his face was altered, and he was fain to weep like a little child, a baby, and no more; but his tears were finished, so had he run, and he could not weep, only his brain flashed great knives of pain through him, and his eyes were like two nails driven into his head. And he wrung his hands, perceiving himself a sinner and abandoned, and he prayed for mercy, if only for the cheering of Athens, for the cheering of his country—of Hellas, and for the salvation of Truth and of Beauty and of the Life of the World. And in a manner he cast hope from him, and in a manner he lost hope never a whit; and he ran in torture, and the day waxed and the sun shone forth anew, and he perceived it not but ran with his soul huddled within him, heaped upon itself, striving to reach the God. And thus did he pass Argos and out of the hot plain into the hills climbed he.

And how shall I tell you that it was now,—when he looked down once more and beheld, as in a vision, the Isthmus drawn like a golden band between sea and sea, the blue and brilliant seas of Korinth and of Saron; where before him, step on step, rose skyward the golden-rocked and bronzen-wooded hills of Megara, and beyond, the edge of Kithairon; and lo, eastward, whence over the world's edge the night so soon should rise, the coned Aigina and Salamis all glorious, and, gold and violet and silver, Attika,—that it was now when the supremest Visitation reached him? For he had learnt, as he ran,

that not himself for himself was all ; but first, himself for the shining City, for Athens, and soon, himself for Attika. And soon again, himself for Hellas, even as Hellas was for him. And lo, himself, claimed as friend and brother by the earth and water and winds and skies, and by the god within them : himself comraded, inspired, souled by the God Himself.

And at Sparta he had learnt how men were little, and he had learnt that he too was a man and little. He knew that the God was with him and in him, yet was he not the God. He had sinned ; he had worshipped what was false ; himself he had set for homage in the shrine that God had built. But now he knew. Now was he indeed aware of God and of the world and of himself in God and yet as called to Him ; and to obey that calling, every struggle, every fight was owed. Pain had taught him, and therefore he loved the pain. And he loved himself and he left himself, and he loved the land, and knew that he must leave it, and he loved his fellow men whom, aforetime, he had hated, and he passed through Megara saluting and unsaluted. And he came even to Eleusis, and he adored in soul the shrine ; and the aged Hierophant, the utterly initiate, who had gazed deep into the eyes of God, recognised those Eyes shining forth like stars from the sun-blackened runner who staggered past him, with his lips drawn grinning back from the teeth, the eyes red-socketed and staring, the breast scarred by the nails that had torn at its panting agony. Hideous was Philippides to see, yet from his face shone the God's eyes, like stars. And a great voice was heard that went chanting from Eleusis, and all men heard it and wondered. And a cloud and a glory went with Philippides from Eleusis, and in

the cloud the gods ; and the Maiden cast her veil across his forehead to cool him, and the Earth-Mother made soft grass to grow beneath, to cheer him. And behold, the holy night was round about him, starry, ambrosial, and he ran down the slope into the olive-gardens and he came to the Agora, and stayed, and knew it not.

And they swarmed about him and questioned him, and he told them in a few words and he bade them worship Pan. And they praised him and rebuked him, and they railed upon the Spartans for delaying, but others chid them and bade them venerate the customs of the gods ; and they were for taking Philippides to the Hall of Athens, to bathe and to anoint and to garland him, and then to the Goddess in the citadel.

But behold, when he would have stood up to go, he could not, for now he had duly finished all things, and God gathered up his life and he fell forward in their hands and died.

And they sent the news to Kallimachos at Marathon, and in but few days they fought the Persians there, and Pan sent Terror into the barbarians, and they fled ; and behold, the new moon had passed and the Spartans came, and by one day were too late ; and they stood and looked upon the dead, the men of Athens, one hundred and ninety-two. And them did they bury, and at Marathon you still may see the mound they built above them. And for Pan they set an altar in the side of the citadel, and a lamp burned there to do him honour, and still is his grotto venerable there, though his lamp is dead. But of Philippides no man knows the tomb.

AT THE QUENCHING OF LAMPS

Wer des Todes Nacht liebend erschaut,
Wem sie ihr tief Geheimnis vertraut,
Des Tages Lügen, Ruhm und Ehr',
Macht und Gewinn, so schimmend hehr
Wie eitler Staub der Sonnen
Sind sie vor dem zersponnen !
Tristan und Isolde.

WHEN Antiphon left the harbour of Alexandria in his little sailing boat, the sun had already set, and a purple dusk, depth beyond depth, almost palpable, veiled sky and sea, and was hiding all horizons. Yet over the sea, the warm and welcoming Egyptian sea, a manifold and interwoven light was brooding.

Already Antiphon had passed beyond the close neighbourhood of the harbour theatres and booths, and isolated lamps alone now twinkled down the quays, pathetic, derelict, perishing sparks flung from the great conflagration yonder, itself doomed already and expecting death. For, as Antiphon, helping himself a little with the paddle, floated across the enormous harbour, the furnace-glare of the retreating city grew quickly dimmed and tranquillized. Still the red glow reached the little boat and tinged its sides and gave it heavier shadows ; but its violence was finished : even the harsh braying of the trumpets and the throb of tambourine and drum and the hoarse uproar of a populace drunk with gaiety were defeated, now, by distance, fused and molten, as it were, into a hive-like hum ; or

sighing, now more heavily, like the reverberation of some deep string upon an instrument, and now, after a little gasp or sob of sound, thinning themselves out upon the tiny wind, and replaced at once, for Antiphon, by the infinitesimal voice of the water passing underneath the boat, lifting it, tilting it, and then falling from the wood and the oar with a tiny patter of drops. The town seemed, by now, incredibly remote to Antiphon, as he sat there in the sultry evening; it was a marvel to him that it could ever have meant so much to him, that life of bazaar and brothel; that furious music, and that red furnace. He had turned his back on all it stood for. To that, he knew himself already dead.

At that moment, he turned the angle of a jetty, and lo, before him the Pharos, holding its great lamp aloft outside the harbour mouth, there on its little island. Its enormous foundation of masonry massed itself dark, indeed, against the dusk, yet etherealized somewhat and gnawed into, as it were, by the mysterious twilight. A skeleton work of metal topped the masonry, and aloft, in its iron cage, blazed the beacon-light itself, steady, and golden in colour. Steady and golden, the Pharos made a strange contrast with the smoky flare, the waving shadows and dazzling flashes of the mainland; yet still Antiphon in a sense resented it. Obstinate, contemptuous, as it were, it stood there; neither luring men back to land, nor pointing them seaward: revealing the harbour mouth indeed, should a man elect to leave or enter it; yet, on the whole, seemingly content with its one duty of shining, certain of its unquenchable endurance. But Antiphon knew, as he passed beneath it, that here after all was no heaven-fallen fire; nor even, an essential chimney, as it were, to hell, a lamp

fed with an undying, infernal fuel. Man's hand had built that pyramid and tower; it should fall, as years passed; its very island base might crumble. Man's mind had knit together the iron-work of the lantern; corroded by the salt it too should snap and tumble and the flame should die. For the very flame had been lighted and protected by man's hands and thought, and needed daily food, and in fine was but accidentally better than the flickering wicks of the quays or the flare of the far theatre.

Antiphon looked resentfully at the Pharos as the very type of those philosophies which had failed him. He had tested them, so he well believed, and they had failed him. The treacherous, solvent intellect had played him false. As a man who squanders in amours his power of loving, finds, when his hour comes, that his soul is grown disastrously impotent and has no love left for loving, so, in the intellectual irresponsibility of his late youth, Antiphon had wasted his true power of knowing, and not even the Stoicism, in which he had tried to brace those powers which he so well saw were falling flaccid, could succour him to-night, at the supreme crisis, when he had to ask himself whether indeed his will could cope any more with life, or whether he might, as he so longed to, leave it. He was not, indeed, as in later generations one so driven right to bay undoubtedly would have been, tortured out of life. Much of life had of itself just died away from him: many a filament, too, of thought had spontaneously shrivelled and left his mind free to be ignorant; many another he had deliberately unwound from about his brain. To Stoicism itself he sat, now, as it were, lightly, though even Stoicism offered him, here to hand, a whole theory of suicide. Or at least, true (should he wish to be true)

to Stoic lines of thought, he saw that chosen death need be no act of violence, no insolence done to that order in which he knew the Universe must live, and he therein. The Law; the trend of the Totality! He should live in peace with that. . . . Well, since all circumstance, even of thought, was loathsome now to him, why were worse violence done should he desert this theatre of revolt and sink into the sea of elemental existence which followed death? Why were less obstinacy displayed in accepting the great solicitation of the waves, and in rejoining that universal calm, that unindividual mode of being which underlay the noisy, separate life of consciousness, than in forcing himself to live, untainted even, in the crowd of tainted men?

Still, he bowed his head and tried to find guidance in a once beloved prayer:

> Ἄγου δέ μ' ὦ Ζεῦ καὶ σύ γ' ἡ Πεπρωμένη
> ὅποι ποθ' ὑμῖν εἰμι διατεταγμένος.
> ὡς ἕψομαι γ' ἄοκνος· ἢν δὲ μὴ θέλω,
> κακὸς γενόμενος, οὐδὲν ἧττον ἕψομαι.[1]

But the spell failed in power. It but proved once more that, were the duty of non-resistance indeed a true one, less resistance, more trust might be involved in the making of himself over to the insistent summoning of the waters, than in the grim resolve to row home once more, disembark, regain his lodging and the land's law of life.

[1] Lead me, O God, and thou my Destiny,
To that one place which you will have me fill.
I follow gladly. Should I shrink from Thee,
Made wholly vile, I needs must follow still.
Cleanthes.

In the accustomed parable, he reminded himself that he was but as some dog, fastened to the jolting, rolling cart. Resist he might, and be dragged; run he might, unresisting; but ever must he perforce reach the goal whereto the Driver drove. And now something of the torture, not proper to his age, entered him. He knew the dislocation of his self upon life's rack. Soul and sense had long since, for him, been divorced. That agony was healed. But now spirit was torn within itself; how to follow with docility he knew not: though he meant to move obediently to the Law and the Force, the cart swerved suddenly this way and that, or accelerated, abruptly, its speed, and the wretched dog was hideously tugged and tossed about by the uncaring Driver. The fable helped no more: thought helped no more: as a man with failing heart feels himself leaden-footed, stricken at the knees, netted where he stands, so the mind of Antiphon strove to move, to decide, and could not, and he drifted, in his little boat, out beyond the Pharos.

To the pursuing illumination of its lamp the risen moon added a sinister radiance. The moon, huge and orange colour, hung low above the flat shore-line and the eastward sea: she should have been Isis, he felt, white, cold, virginal; and behold her, complaisant, sultry, a flushed accomplice, adding glamour to the revels in the city. Already in the morning Isis had appeared on his horizon. Her sacred boat had sailed away, garlanded with gay flowers, escorted by a whole flotilla of pleasure-boats filled with mummers still masked, to obtain from the goddess a lucky spring. The town had spent its day in feasting. Before the settling of dusk, a brief respite had been granted. Women were resting, or adorning

themselves for the night's enjoyment. Men's thoughts were flitting, lazily as yet, round the savage hours approaching; as evening finally closed in, the expectant panting of the town grew as it were audible. The town awoke and panted; with quick whispers between, it strained and sobbed for its prey: its vast voice gathered; a great laughing and a hymning, an immense greed for the pleasure and perversity of life poured upwards, with the shabby glare from the bazaars, into the sky, and, when the moon arose, balefully contemplating the revels of her votaries, a huge cry rose too to Isis; down every street the sacred sistrum rattled: the untainted Maiden was hailed by the animal outcry of all that sweating, shameless crowd.

Fixing his eyes seaward, Antiphon placed behind him the bazaar, and the Pharos, and the moon.

Yet lo, even out to sea, a tiny light, burning at the prow of a lonely fishing-boat.

Into the silence created by Antiphon's unanswered prayer, a voice from this ship floated; a high and almost strident voice, doubtless, in itself; yet, rarified by the distance, and spiritualized by an amazing passion, it was cleansed of all that might have felt rough and overfibrous in texture. The fisherman was singing, it would seem, a hymn in honour of some local deity unknown to Antiphon.

Βροτέας γενέας
σῶτερ Ἰησοῦ,
ποιμήν, ἀροτήρ,
οἷαξ στόμιον,
πτέρον οὐράνιον
παναγοῦς πολύμνης,
ἁλιεῦ μερόπων
τῶν σωζομένων

πελάγους κακίας,
ἰχθῦς ἁγνούς
κύματος ἐχθροῦ
γλυκερῇ ζωῇ δελεάζων.[1]

Critic to the last, he smiled at the crude anapæsts. He admired the accumulation of cult-titles, recited, doubtless, lest, invoked by the wrong name, the dæmon might feel injured and retaliate unpropitiously. He perceived also how this fisherman had created a god after his own likeness—a god who goes fishing! marvelled Antiphon, clear that the human brain was an untiring artificer of the grotesque. Or possibly—there had been one word he did not recognize, with a half Greek, half Syrian sound . . . perhaps it was the shape of some odd oriental sprite for whom this magic formula was fashioned. The Syrians, he knew, had a fish-goddess, with sacred fish; and a Dagon, half man, half monster of the sea. Perhaps the hymn was for them.

Cynically cruel, then, were They, who, by promise and bait of "life," should withdraw their captives from that element in which alone they could live!

The little fishing smack was returning to shore. It floated by him. The tiny lantern swung, not as Antiphon had thought, before Isis, or the Dioscuri, or any

[1] Of the human race
Thou Saviour, Jesus,
Thou Shepherd and Ploughman,
Thou Rudder and Bridle,
Thou heavenly Wing
Of the all-holy flock:
Fisherman of mortals
Who are being saved
From the sea of evil,
With sweetest life enticing
Thy holy fish
From the hostile wave.

sea nymph. Only a dark cross-like design, with one or two indistinguishable letters, and perhaps an olive branch, were painted on the prow.

Quite close to Antiphon the boat passed, with its cross and its lamp and its high wailing outcry upon the divine Fisherman of mortals. . . . Somehow it clinched his resolve.

"I will plunge," said he to himself, "whence none shall draw me forth."

"I at least will pass across," said he, "like a man who has learnt the loveliest of life, and, having learnt, renounces, trusting to That which began all this, which led me through it, and shall accomplish me."

Sitting in the boat, he tied his feet firmly together with the thong of the paddle. The paddle he let drift down the wave. He then held his hands palm upward towards the unseeing skies, and repeated slowly the most musical of all the lines he knew—the final chorus in the tragedy of Sophoklês—the farewell of the weary sufferer Philoktetês to the island which had seen his torment, and which he was leaving for a perhaps more tolerable scene. Only, he substituted in thought for the name of the lonely island Lemnos, the name of that great Universe of which he was, and ever would be, part, but from one life in which into another he now meant to emigrate.

χαῖρ' ὦ Λημνοῦ πέδον ἀμφίαλον,
καί μ' εὐπλοίᾳ πέμψον ἀμέμπτως
ἔνθ' ἡ μεγάλη Μοῖρα κομίζει
γνώμη τε φίλων, χῶ πανδαμάτωρ
Δαίμων, ὃς ταῦτ' ἐπέκρανεν.[1]

[1] Farewell, O sea-girt land of Lemnos, and speed me with a fair and flawless sailing, whither the mighty Fate doth fetch me, and

For a moment he saw the earth and sea, as he had known them, ringed with eternity. Into that Eternity he begged whatever speeding the universal fate might grant to him. The stars, visible now, might stand, he thought, his friends; over it all, and through them all, spread the Infinite Spirit, the energy, nay, the love, which thrilled the world and summoned him.

Hoisting himself on the gunwale, he knotted his heavy cloak around his head and plunged.

He sank, and rose, and sank again in the darkness of the night and of the water.

Meanwhile the fisherman, having reached his miserable hut on the extreme verge of the shore, partook with his wife and little children of his evening meal of coarse bread and fish, and the fermented juice of grain. For him, another repast contained a bread and a cup more living and more unearthly, yet even here, as their hands broke the humble food, awe was in their eyes. Then, seeing that the ill-smelling lamp was about to expire, they turned to where upon the planks of the wall were daubed, again, the Cross, the Fish, the monograms, the olive-sprig, the anchor and the manna-pot: and to the undying Light they sang:

φῶς ἱλαρὸν ἁγίας δόξης
ἀθανάτου Πατρὸς, Ἰησοῦ Χριστέ,
ἐλθόντες ἐπὶ τοῦ ἡλίου δύσιν,
ἰδόντες φῶς ἑσπερινόν,
ὑμνοῦμεν Πατέρα καὶ υἱὸν,
καὶ ἅγιον πνεῦμα θεοῦ.
ἄξιος εἶ ἐν πασὶ καιροῖς
ὑμνεῖσθαι φωναῖς ὁσίαις,

---

the will of friends, and the all-quelling Spirit that hath ratified these things upon me.

υἱὲ θεοῦ, ζωὴν ὁ διδούς·
διὸ ὁ κοσμός σε δοξάζει.[1]

Having sung thus they lay down, and slept with much serenity and quiet, till the toilsome day returned, and they rose, and welcomed it.

[1] O glad Light of the holy glory of the immortal Father, Jesus Christ, having come unto the setting of the sun, and having seen the evening star, we hymn the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit of God. Worthy art Thou at all times to be sung with holy voices, O Son of God, Thou who givest life. Wherefore the Universe doth praise Thee

AN EVENING AT EPHESUS

ὃ ἔγενετο ἐν αὐτῷ, ζωὴ ἦν.[1]

EARLIER in the afternoon, a thunderstorm had washed the summer day to freshness, and now the sun was setting in a limpid west. The marble villa, raised above Ephesus, not so high but that the murmur of the city reached it—in fact, at the bottom of the steep garden the street was paved and populous—stood golden among its trees. It was the evening when Anaximander came to visit Diodidaktos, for, each fifth day, one of the two old friends would sup with the other, turn and turn about, and to-night Diodidaktos was host. This had been their custom for quite a number of years, save when Diodidaktos was on his travels, for he travelled much, and asked of his wealth most of all that it should show him the world and the ways of men. Trajan was Emperor at Rome, and the whole scheme of life, in the inhabited earth, might well be challenging a man's philosophy. The friends had agreed upon the fifth day for the whimsical reason that the morrow and the aftermorrow of a supper should be spent, the first, in unthoughtful repose upon a pleasant memory, the second, in serene reflection upon what ideas it had provided; then came a neutral day: then, a period of half-felt loneliness

[1] "That which came to exist in Him, was life."—*Evang. sec. Ioann.*, i.

growing into desire: the day itself of the next meeting, the fifth day, was spent in joyous anticipation of the evening. Thus did the two old men gently delude themselves, philosophizing over and systematizing an affection which, in truth, was as simple as a schoolboy's.

The Arkadian slave announced supper, and they left the terrace, where they had been making sure that it would be dry enough for them to sit after the meal, and drink their wine beneath the moon. Certainly it would be dry enough. Diodidaktos gave the order. A table should be set out, and low chairs, with rugs and footstools.

As they passed through the vestibule Anaximander exclaimed in astonishment:

"But look, Diodidaktos! The horrible little Heraklês is gone! What does that mean? Have you suddenly found it was intolerable, as I always said? What has converted you?"

The little Heraklês was an ancient theme of affectionate quarrel. The coarse terra-cotta image had been brought there, years before, by the Arkadian slave, whose devotion to the famous hero was profound, and there it had stood, clashing singularly with the graceful appointments of the vestibule (for the philosopher was, too, an artist), and the more irretrievably because of the grotesque practice of the slave, which never ceased to annoy Anaximander. Chremês used to tie little pieces of rag or even wisps of wool or flax to the image, whenever he asked a favour from it; the rags hung there till the favour was granted; and as the kindly hero's refusals were, for all his kindliness, more numerous by far than his favours, the little statue had practically disappeared beneath a mop of dis-

coloured tattered stuffs, quite fantastically out of keeping with the exquisite Asiatic textures which alone diversified the marble.

"He took it away himself," answered Diodidaktos, smiling. "I quite miss it."

"How like you," said the other, almost petulantly. "You weakly give in to a slave's whim in the first instance, and then defend your action, and end by believing your defence!"

"Why should I have disappointed him? It pleased him so much, and made—really! a not unpleasant contrast. And so I grew accustomed to it. Old folks do grow accustomed. And Arkadia I love, and all that comes from it."

"I have never understood your affection for those barbaric mountains. What can they breed but boors?"

"Hush! Chremês will overhear you: and him too I love."

"Why has he taken away his statue?"

"Ah," said the other, his tone altering, "frankly, I cannot understand. He is different, these days."

"Perhaps the good Heraklês has been too obdurate, and he has shifted his homages?"

"No, it is in all his talk, his looks, his silences . . ."

"Tut, he is in love," said Anaximander.

Diodidaktos laughed a little.

"He constantly falls in love," he answered, "and is none the worse for it. At most, a little distracted in his work. Now he has, if anything, more industry, and especially, more foresight."

"Oh, it is love, be sure of it. Don't they call love an inspiration? He is inspired!"

Diodidaktos regretted, in his friend, only a certain tone

of cynicism and of raillery. He could allow for it, however, and now, without arguing, altered the subject.

"There are such lovely places in Arkadia! Never shall I forget my autumn there! Could you but see the 'down-dropping water of the Styx,' Anaximander—the terrible sheer red cliff of Chelmos, with the black, glistening streak where the straight waterfall has set it streaming, and the fall itself—like a silver veil as it hangs, motionless, with Iris in its silver, motionless, or just swaying like smoke in the finest zephyr, and lo, a roaring cataract where it reaches the rocks below. Oh, Anaximander, the beautiful blue-green cataract; the grey rocks with the snow in their clefts; the terrible thundering echoes, and the baying of the wild dogs that roam there . . . Hekaté wanders there, assuredly; Artemis hunts there: the place is full of demons."

"Lo, our old quarrel, Diodidaktos. Colours, sounds—melting snows and fleeting waters—what are these to the true philosopher? Why waste time upon the fleeting, the vanishing appearances of the never-the-same, the corruptible and the illusory? And why, O you whose whole life should be one warfare against the myths that becloud men's minds, why do you elect to speak of Hekatés and huntresses and what not, and set these monstrous shadows once more to pass and play across the mist of human thought?"

"But the myths of Arkadia are beautiful, and Arkadia is beautiful."

"I am like Sokratês, who said that fields and trees had nothing at all to teach him, and better than Plato, who, though he professed to bid farewell to the starry heavens, and the woes and wailings of stringed instruments, that he

might find his joy in the concept of pure number, absolute motion, and sheer relationship, till he should pass behind, into the Ever-the-same, the Unrelated, and the One,—yet did bedeck his philosophy in such human draperies of allegory, that none know what he teaches and what rejects."

"I am like Sophoklês," retorted Diodidaktos, smiling, "who loved the little valleys, and the jonquils, and the nightingales; and I am weaker—ah! than Plato, who, because of the human loveliness of his poetry—for Plato was a poet—has captivated for three whole centuries the thoughts of those even who would be his enemies!"

"But oh—Arkadia! with its river Aroania, where trout sing like thrushes—its Tegea, which a lock of Medusa's hair has made impregnable: Mount Lykaios, where the man who sees the sacrifice becomes a wolf——"

"Hush," cried the other, still smiling, but more gravely, "do not blaspheme that myth at any rate! With my own eyes, before now, I have beheld a mortal, who, too eager to gaze with unveiled face upon the hidden things of the gods, thrust himself, insolently, upon the inmost secret, and turned, on a sudden, into a beast, and lived no more a man's life, but a beast's . . ."

He said this, trusting utterly to their friendship; for long ago, Anaximander, in his youth, after a period of incredible austerity, philosophic absorption, and contempt of his fellow men, had lapsed suddenly into a life of unmeasured wantonness and riot. Only the unrebuking loyalty of Diodidaktos had suddenly shown him to himself, and restored him. All Anaximander's petulance dropped from him.

"But after nine years," he said, half wistfully, "if the man-wolf has refrained from slaying man as do his fellow wolves, he can return to human shape?"

"Assuredly," said his friend, very gently. "And so to conquer is a triumph better than any at the games."

"It was your help, dear friend——" he began; but his voice broke, and his thought wandered back to the years when fidelity, now so certain, was strained almost to the snapping point.

"There is another myth of the Wolf Mountain," said Diodidaktos, "which too you ought to love. When a man climbs to its summit, there within the Temple precinct, he casts no shadow. Perchance, when we—when I—shall have truly scaled the heights and entered into that Temple which awaits us, we shall no longer need to cast those human shadows upon things which now we cast, and I shall not even need to contemplate these fair shadows of the God, which all things are, and which I love, for they are lovely, but you reject them, being shadows."

They ceased; and for them sitting there the last twilight died and only the two tall cressets sent wavering dark and brightness round the ceiling and the walls. Outside, they could see that the air was tremulous with moonlight. Cleansing their fingers on fine bread, they went out to the terrace, where the fruit was piled in delicate baskets of ivory, and the wine gleamed black beneath the moon.

"But seriously, my friend," said Anaximander when they were sitting down, "your writing has become, for many people, quite useless, because of its robes of allegory. You hurt your reputation for letters among both true philosophers and ordinary folk."

"I have none," he answered, "and I seek none."

"These think you esoteric, and shun you; those, frivolous, and disregard you."

"Frivolous I am," said Diodidaktos, perversely perhaps; "but not because, with Plato, I write in allegory."

"Only yesterday, talking to a Roman——"

Diodidaktos made an infinitely expressive gesture.

"Oh, yes," Anaximander urged, "a Roman, and you can't neglect the Romans! Vulgar are they, these rich men from over-seas, and they cannot create and cannot even understand: yet are they our rulers; and if you do not Hellenize them, they will Romanize us, and are indeed well on already with their vulgarizing work. Speak to them so that they will hear!"

"But am I really, for the sake of these complacent men, who know neither when nor how to laugh, nay, nor how to dress nor eat, am I for them to sacrifice the poet's most delicate methods of all, reticence, subtlety, hint, and, above all, irony? Irony is the Greek's birthright. Irony is employed for the delight of the elect, and for punishment of self-satisfied barbarians. What else do they deserve?"

"But your subtle thrusts are wasted. They absorb them, unnoticing. Your points are too pointed to be felt."

"There I conquer! They perish, and perceive it not."

"But your victory is meant to be in the mind. Of what avail, to confute, if they whom you confute never guess their own defeat?"

"They do guess it—they stand bewildered. But we —we sit, and smile."

"Ah, no! Diodidaktos! you malign yourself. You, a Hellene, with, as you said, the prerogative of quick

wit, to use it so! What better are you, how are you not worse, than the Roman at his gladiatorial show?"

"Dear friend—yes! perhaps in my pique I spoke too fast. Never at all am I really moved to selfish retaliation save when these pompous and portentous Romans, putting forth the placard of Universal Knowledge and Councillors-in-Chief to God, complacently upbraid me with shirking truth, or disguising truth, or masking my own thought because they find my parchments 'ambiguous' or vague, not realizing that that alone can be stated neatly and compactly which is not worth stating at all. But these are very few, and even they are like to have nobler instincts which they depress."

They were silent for a while, and his thoughts flitted backwards and forwards from the solemn offices and class-rooms of the Capital, to the strange dream in which Arkadia still lay. To Arkadia, too, Anaximander's thoughts reverted.

"But Diodidaktos! how are your myths *true?* My astronomy is true: my theories of numbers or of rhythm may be untrue, but from the true they start, and are offered as but hypotheses. How are your tales true? The man does *not* become a wolf: the very Arkadian who tells it, disbelieves it; and no Arkadian would dream of owning to your poetical remodelling of the tale. You take a principle of ethics, of politics, education, what not—and you cast all into doubt by involving it in myth."

"Dear Anaximander, you conceive awry the very nature of a myth, and of its truth. Its truth is not what he who frames it sees, nor what he who narrates it sees. There is, throughout it, an impulse from the Gods. The poet, when he sings, sings without calculation; and when

the impulse is gone by, he wakes, and pauses, and perceives he has sung marvels whereof, while singing, he had no knowledge. Nay, and others, brooding over his words, shall show him what they contained, and he knew it not, for not he put it there, but Apollo. He on the man was playing as a master-harpist on his harp, drawing therefrom harp-music, in good sooth, for the harp is a harp and not a flute,—not violence to his instrument does the God work—yet far better than any lesser being might draw from it, and far better than the harp, left to itself, untouched, untried, might have uttered. The poet's task, too, is it to reveal to man what treasures of thoughts noble and divine are really theirs, concealed by Zeus in the shrine of their own soul, which they had never yet unveiled. Though for some, better were it if never they peered within. . . . Truth, O Anaximander, is inexhaustible, and once the poet touches Truth, he strikes a note that echoes to the Infinite, and he can never *limit* his meaning."

"At times, Diodidaktos, you madden me! Explain me this, that thinking alike on scarcely any subject, we yet stick friends! My argument goes thus: granting that for poets and common-folks allegory is good and licit, yet even for them, surely you should make it clear whether *now* you are speaking allegory, now not! You ought to say: Such is my allegory; now will I explain it. But you speak—oh, like Plato, of 'carpenters, beds, metal-work' and what not, and expect us on a sudden to descry therein whole mysteries. Again, you are indignant if we suspect that *here*, or *here*, you may have some meaning behind the obvious!"

Diodidaktos smiled, and rising, paced the terrace. He

looked out over the enormous view which the moonlight flooded. There were the distant mountains, southward, Mount Prion, Mount Paktyas, and beyond, curving round the bay, its point losing itself behind the long island ridge of Samos, the glorious line of Mykalê. So extraordinarily brilliant was the night, that not alone the winding Kaÿster and the channel from the sea into the great harbour shone like silver, but the paler roads, the Magnesian road, the road to Smyrna, were dimly visible. Great masses, too, of buildings might be discerned: the Stadium; even, he fancied, the theatre hollowed out into the Akropolis at the further end of the long market-place; but above all, the enormous temple of the Ephesian Artemis, faint indigo and silver in the vast empty spaces of its sanctuary. He stood listening: imagination succoured him; in the confused murmur of the city, not yet asleep, he fancied he could distinguish the sounds he knew must meet in it —the sailors' cries and the creeking of pulleys: the songs of women; the drunken laughter of youths among the taverns, and especially from the Goddess's sanctuary, where, in the huddled huts along its walls, an army of miscreants dwelt in sordid safety. And lo, confronting one another, the enormous temple and the sea! These gathered up, for Diodidaktos, two vast mysterious choruses, two terrible heavenward outcries, the general prayer of man, and the praise of nature. For untold generations, what passionate crowds had not flocked towards that shrine, built and rebuilt across the ages! What thronging pilgrimages had not flocked to the feet of the many-breasted Mother of them all! Yes, the dreadful ancient Goddess, many-breasted, many-named, Mother of men and Queen of beasts and birds, held there her court; in

that strange welcome met student and mendicant, scribe of hymns and prayers, and murderer, harlot, humble devotee and fanatic. She indeed was the Force, in her vast symbol was enrobed the Force that swayed the world, issuing into strife, and love, death, birth and re-creation. . . . And yet the sea and the echoing silver mountains, and the empty sky where the Moon sailed splendid, summed up, they too, the thrust and aspiration of the Life-force: differently, more pure, not less august, they at that moment seemed, and yet less human. But, the human heart that had sought from them a symbol of the great Expression, the Utterance of God to men, had fallen into grossness, into manifest worship of the ungodlike, no less surely than the idolaters of the weird image of the Goddess. . . .

As he stood there he knew but one thing, namely, that this outspread scene carried with it some vast signification: it stood for something: it pointed further than itself: it conveyed a Thought, and Thought was Light, and a Truth. And Truth was the real; the living, the ultimate real. How he yearned to reach it! But the brilliant moonlit scene for him was darkness. He could not fathom it. Man, he knew, must of a surety be a truer image, a more explicit Utterance of the Ultimate than aught else, yet how so?—how were these drunken revellers, these fantastic worshippers, in every way more vocal of God than the silvery shadowy mountains, and this sea of molten silver? The Image in its Temple, ablaze with lamps, than the lonely Moon?

"The very light is darkness," he muttered.

"Were it so indeed, Master," said Chremês, at his elbow, "great were that darkness. But now the light is

shining in the darkness, and the darkness cannot imprison it."

Frightened, it would seem, by his own voice's sound, he stopped, and explained his errand. A friend, Diphilos, had passed by the house, accompanying into the town a very old man who had been supping at a farm above them. Might the two travellers sit for a brief moment and rest? For the aged man was weary.

Willingly they might rest. Did he know the aged man? Yes, he knew him. . . . The slave spoke as though he were a little dazed.

Why, Anaximander asked, had he removed the Heraklês?

"There are stronger than Heraklês," he answered, vaguely.

"On whose name then do you now call, when you need succour? Who is the stronger?"

The slave moved awkwardly, and fingered a little ivory disc, shaped like a theatre ticket, which hung round his neck. He glanced deprecatingly at his master.

"Courage, Chremês," he said, kindly. "Do not fear Anaximander. He shall not laugh at you! Place your light in whatever lampstand you will! The darkness, O most sage philosopher, shall indeed not extinguish it. Well said, Chremês! True witness, truly borne, to the true light!"

He nodded, and the slave, still seemingly half-dazed, retired.

"Love-lorn," laughed Anaximander. "Love-lost altogether. I shouldn't trust the trimming of your lamps to him, my friend. But answer me my argument. All science, or all allegory. All clear knowledge, or all poetry, all dream. All or none."

"O worthiest friend, your uncompromising All or None! 'You cannot divide hot and cold with a hatchet.' A wiser than either of us once said that. In life, be sure, Truth is manifold. There is this truth of things we touch and see. Therein, no man, I own it, becomes a wolf. There is the poetical truth of metaphor; and herein man well may be said to become a wolf; and ethically, deeper still, he may sink into the beast. And there are truths of the understanding, untrue for ever physically, and neither true nor untrue ethically, as what you delight in dreaming of, the Circle as such, Motion as such, the Infinite, the Unrelated. And there is spiritual truth, which is the life wherein are rooted these true ideas, and right laws, and lovely imaginings, and good and pleasant things. And through ideas and laws and dreams and things, that Life tells itself forth, utters itself more or less perfectly; now more, now less; now intelligibly to me, now not; now too darkly for my wits, perchance because 'tis *my* wit, perchance, because 'tis human wit at all. So in the world at large, if I do contemplate it, I see now more, now less, of God's great Utterance, perchance a word, perchance a phrase; now, but a letter, or scattered letters, or again, syllables; perchance I can but feel sure that what I see and hear must spell somewhat of the mighty Proclamation, yet know not what; or again, I may see, for a flash, and then go blind again; hear, and relapse to being deaf. And if then I try to re-utter what I see and hear, or have seen and heard, how shall I do so save by a throbbing discourse, a pulsing speech, throbbing and pulsing with more knowledge or with less according as my memories contain—nay, as my first perceptions contained, and were by me known so to contain, more or

less response to the Challenge of that Life. And that which comes to root its existence in that life, is alone in truth existing and alive."

He paused, and from the dark garden arose the murmur of Chremês talking to his two guests. It would appear that the old man was speaking, but the words were inaudible.

"Alas," said Anaximander, "what confusion! Confused language, Diodidaktos! yours ever is: and, I fear, beneath it, confused thought."

For a moment Diodidaktos showed anger; almost contempt.

"I have said before," said he, "that only at the cost of slaying the life in that of which you speak, can you move by what you, Anaximander, call clear thoughts, and state them clearly. Life flows, life throbs. In the world and in the soul, somewhat, risen to the surface, plunges anew, and re-emerges different already; and the ripples themselves, in that through which it rises, are re-absorbed—vanish and are not lost. The sea has not a pattern, like a temple cornice; nor the wind a rhythm like a hexameter, though sea and wind are musical most utterly."

"God geometrizes."

"But He hides His geometry. Man's skeleton is hidden, and man is not his skeleton."

"Ah, man! man! man! Your mind is plunged in matter and in humanity. Your ideas are swaddled up in flesh. For me, the disincarnate!"

"Alas, dear friend," said the other gently; "here indeed is where we, once and for all, do differ. For me, That which a thing is meant to be, is best studied in that poor endeavour towards itself which I see and touch and

afterwards grow to understand. *There* is the cognizable utterance: there is the spoken word. The disincarnate! Would you really, Anaximander, claim to study the essence of the thing aloof, separate, living its spiritual life in God's inviolable mind? No, no! God has stamped Himself upon this world of ours; it rises to His likeness as the wax to the seal's: it moulds itself to Him, like the garment to the wearer. It reproduces Him, like son a father —yea, as so many say, this dear world is His one-begotten, His well-beloved, His substantial reflection, His mediator to our minds. Nor will I neglect it nor desert it, nor be ungrateful to it; it brings God to me; it fills me with Him; I eat it, I drink it, and grow inebriate with God."

The other, touched by his friend's fervour, became gentle in his turn, almost sad.

"Dear Diodidaktos," he answered, "remember this; that you and I both own that though the world is a Word from God, yet *is* it not God: you honour it *as* His word, I transcend it, being *but* His word, seeking Himself. In truth, dear friend, the difference between us is but very slight. It is the difference between two human thoughts; but the difference between either of these, and the God they image forth, is infinite."

"Alas, you are too right! And now what shall we do? Men by your way and by mine have, these ages past, sought and sought yet further; and the utmost we can reach is a poor half understanding of one another! But of *Him* . . . ! What shall the future bring?"

"The future! What else than the rearrangement of the past! We have used up all human thinking. We are at the end. Who should contribute further? Not we. Not Rome. Nay, nor the East, nor Egypt: Egypt

has mated with Hellas, and we have seen the offspring, that it too is powerless for succour. From India I had half hoped—the Brachmans. . . . But see these travellers! what have they brought back, the best of them? No, dear Diodidaktos, here have we for ever God and this one world and this one thought. He is *in* it, yet, because He is not *it*, He is infinitely separate. Our thought, playing over them, yet because it is not they, is severed utterly yet again, and though our ears are echoing dizzily with that great Word, and our eyes dazzled by that Light, yet go we deaf and blind, and very lonely."

They ceased, discouraged.

In this silence were audible the footsteps of the slave and his visitors returning from the paved place in the garden below. Evidently the visitors were departing. The little company, after a moment, emerged from behind a clipped box-hedge, and started to climb the shallow steps leading to the gate. It could be seen that the old man was indeed very old and bowed, with a long silver beard, and a mantle whose hood fell back as he raised his head to look round over the city. He leant on the arm of a disciple, a son perhaps, quite a young man, obviously of the people, enormously strong, and warm-blooded, clearly, for he wore but a light tunic. As they stayed thus to look down upon Ephesus the silence was complete. Now no song was heard, no dog barked. Diodidaktos and Anaximander sat watching, holding their breath: the group of three stood as if carved of stone, black against the sea. Over everything alike, sea and town and temple, the moonlight threw its tremulous glory. Then in the silence the old man spoke, very slowly, very quietly, with long pauses, but with an intensity that thrilled the night:

"In the beginning, existed the Word—
And the Word was with God—
And the Word *was* God."

In the pause the spell lapsed.

"A philosopher, too!" whispered Diodidaktos.

"A Stoic?"

"I expect so. But Syrianized. His accent is Syrian."

The aged voice continued:

"All things by means of Him came into being,
And apart from Him came into being naught.
That which in Him came to be, was Life,
And the Life was the Light of men . . .
The Light is shining in the darkness——"

Chremês broke in upon his voice:

"And the darkness has not prisoned it . . ."

"Alas," whispered Diodidaktos, "neither I nor he can vouch for that. How can he tell?"

The aged voice resumed:

"That which we have heard, that which we have seen with our eyes, that which we have gazed upon and our hands have handled it—concerning the Word of Life—yes! the Life has been revealed, and we have seen, and are bearing witness, and are announcing unto you the Life, Eternal Life, which existed with the Father, and was revealed to us—what we have seen and have heard, that we announce to you also, that you also may have common share with us. . . ." The voice died. . . .

"What can this doctrine be?" Diodidaktos whispered.

"At least the philosopher is on your side," his companion answered—"he has seen, he has handled—how so, one fain would ask!"

Standing unaided, now, the old man stretched his hands towards the city, and the temple, and the sea.

"The Word became Flesh, and spread His tent amongst us——"

"Ah, that," the two old men murmured, in unison, "*that* can never be."

"And we beheld His glory," came the deeper accents of the disciple, "a glory as of One sole-begotten of the Father . . ." his eyes rested on the far horizon, and his voice faltered.

"Full," resumed the old man,—and, on his side, his voice grew stronger till it filled the night—"full of grace and truth."

Chremês bowed his head.

"And from that fullness," he whispered, "we all of us have taken,—ah, favour upon favour . . ."

The aged hand moved crosswise through the air, over the city, over Chremês.

Then the wicket closed behind the speakers, and the slave turned slowly to the house.

"He is too old to teach," said Anaximander.

"But his disciple is young: the future still is his."

They too went in.

UNCHANGING LAKEDAIMON

Parceque c'était lui ; parceque c'était moi.—*Montaigne.*

Oh dear divine Comatas, I would that thou and I
Beneath this broken sunshine this leisure day might lie . . .
Now lift the lid a minute; now, Dorian shepherd, speak !
Two minds shall flow together, the English and the Greek.
From *Ionica.*

"DOES this bore you ?" said the restless Archie, sitting down beside me on the grass, and stretching long, flannelled legs to the sun.

"I should be more excited," I answered, "if I knew the people playing. School matches aren't enormously interesting if you don't, especially if you're too blind to see the details. And then the sun and the smell of the grass always make me sleepy."

"Can you smell the grass ?" he said wonderingly.

"Of course," I answered, closing my eyes.

The wind floated over the wide cricket field, carrying with it all sorts of delicious perfumes. Very subtle was the scent of the mown grass ; and, from the meadows beyond (for the oval sank away on its further side into great hayfields) came the drier, customary odour of the hay, in which the sweetness of clover was quite distinguishable. In wider gusts came the fresh, exquisite fragrances of an enormous stretch of country, bathed in sunlight and wind and all the gaiety of an English afternoon.

I opened my eyes again to watch the low lines of hills,

pale brown and gold and green, shadowed with woods. Down the valley they evaporated into sunlight. Just at the foot of the meadows ran the Ure, flashing silver, here and there, among its woods, and, yonder, spreading out into delicious shallows, silver and olive over the gravel. Archie and I were sitting on a bank, the Pavilion to our right, some way off, a low building with a verandah propped by wooden columns painted white.

"And," I said, "I can smell the oil you've oiled your bat with, and I believe the wood too."

"How awfully odd," said he, and yawned.

"I believe you're bored yourself," I said.

"I'm a bit fed up with cricket, to tell you the truth," he answered. "Too much of it, this term; and all the out-matches are finished. Only ten days more, thank heaven."

"Where are you going?"

"Scotland, after a bit. For some shooting."

"I suppose you'll be sorry to leave, though?"

"In a way. I'm a bit fed up. I want some liberty."

"You're much freer than you used to be, you know."

"Think so? It's a barracks, all the same," said he laconically. "Go about in herds."

"Aristotle," said I, with mock pomposity, "says man lives by twos and not by packs. So I suppose you've got *some* friends you'll be sorry to see the last of?"

He made no answer, and just then a wicket fell.

"Oh, my Lord!" he exclaimed. "*Did* you see that? And I'm in next wicket down. Better go for my pads,"

"Who's the sandy-haired kid in now?" I asked.

"Young Leo Niddes," he said, in so colourless a voice that I looked round at him.

"Pal of yours?" I asked.

"Back in a second," he said, vouchsafing no reply.

With eyes half shut against the sun I watched him stroll towards the pavilion. The hot air quivered upwards, each time the wind paused; the tips of the firs waved and bowed; the grassy levels seemed to undulate as the white figure, already unrecognizable to my short sight, strolled across them.

"How odd," said I to myself, "to decorate a cricket pavilion with Doric columns . . . yes, Doric. . . . But of course . . . and the statues . . . it's just what I'd heard, if this really is the centre of the whole place they're so proud of . . . ir only Archidamos . . ."

At that moment I observed that he had returned and was standing beside me.

"Archidamos," said I, "is this, then, the Aphetaid? And is that colonnade the Choros . . . ?"

"Come with me, Makedonian," he answered. "With difficulty indeed, yet have I obtained permission from my father to escort you."

"Why did you need permission, Archidamos? And why was it difficult to obtain?"

"Permission, dear guest," said he, helping me to rise, "is necessary before ever doing anything. That is invariable. And especially the Spartans do not love much visiting of strangers in their city. But you, Philetairos, were my father's host of old, and may not be refused. You shall see all in order. But that I should be your escort, that was difficult, for among us, the youths are trained to silence and to seclusion among themselves. We may not easily speak with strangers. Even now, that *I* should travel to Makedon, or even Athens, were impossible."

"Why impossible?" I urged, he walking sedately at my side, eyes cast down, hands quietly folded in his cloak. "And why, again, was this permission granted to you?"

"O wide-nostrilled on the trail!" cried he. "In a month of days *I* should ask fewer questions! Yet . . . I shall answer, doubtless; in answering, at least, I may be I.——Well, first, it was once our law to stay here, in hollow Lakedaimon, untainted by the customs and corruptions of the other Greeks. We left it but to fight. We would learn naught from Athens, nor from Korinth at our doors; nay, nor Boiotia. Should we travel, and behold the fair things of Hellas, we would weary of our land, they held, and our ancient ways; we should taste their license, and wax wanton, and act insolently."

"So indeed," I consented, "did your Pausanias, victor of Plataiai, and your gallant Brasidas, who so buffetted Athens of old, till, slaying and slain by Kleon, he destroyed thus the pestle and mortar wherein your states were pounded. And so Lysander. All these your noble generals, drunk with new sights and places, stung by the gadfly of freedom, proved themselves weaklings at heart, and undisciplined, incontinent. Bribes, crowns, plotting with the foe, what of this but must be mentioned in regard of all of them!"

"The Athenians," he gloomily retorted, "are no better."

"But," said I, glancing askance at the boy, "they do not claim to give an education so extraordinary as is yours. At yours, always their philosophers have marvelled. Even when they condemn, they perceive it to be a training indeed, based upon reasoning, and most curiously knit together in all its parts, an accurate drill for mind and spirit; per-

chance a failure in results; perchance hateful in its detail and defying, or ignoring, the true nature of the soul; yet, an exact system, and as such to be honoured."

"But now," said he, rather feverishly, "the joints are being loosed. It falls apart. Once we used iron money, to keep us separate: now we trade freely. Once we held of necessity to our ancestral plot. Now all ties of earth and family and tomb and altars are being snapped. Once, self-sufficient, we governed ourselves and freed others, and broke the power, Philetairos, even of Athens when she played tyrant; now we travel; we copy; we are different in each place; and have striven, now here, now there, ourselves to play the despot, and our harmosts everywhere lay yokes on conquered cities."

"Let us not," said I, "refining on the problems of history, ascertain whether indeed you or Athens did most for freedom. Rather tell me, Archidamos, why you have permission to escort me, and why it was difficult, or peculiar in the getting."

"I am a degenerate son," said he, "and my father himself would be held, by my grandsire, no true Spartan. I belong to years of change: myself, I need changes to pacify me; my father gives me, what my grandsire would deny, some tiny freedoms. Yet what avail that in a few days I shall go to Skotos, for the hunting? The mountains are different, but within the house, all is ever as it was. Yes, hearken! That scarce one of us born Spartans should ever read! I would fain read. I am sick of the laws and customs, taught to us in question-and-answer verses, and of the tales of great men dead. That I know by heart and again and again sing in the Choros. The Athenian theatres! I have heard of their bold poets; and their

mysterious brood of philosophers. Even to have *heard*—that, in Sparta, seems unequalled."

But we had been talking for the last few minutes in Sparta's one wide street, Aphetai. Like a huge wall, Taÿgetos towered above us, some five and twenty furlongs westward. Purple-black it towered, scarred with ravines and gorges and crowned with snows most stainless. This group of unwalled villages, this Sparta I had loved to read of and now saw, stood on five little hillocks in their broad saucer of rich soil; and on north and east the wide bed of the Eurotas, in which the water ran rapidly over gravel, made a shield of silver with green shadows where olives and willows and fruit trees bowed luxuriously along its edges. Nearer us, the river parted, and enclosed an island densely wooded with plane-trees.

"Here," said he, "between the dancing place and the gymnasium is the Persian colonnade. Look! Mardonios. That speaks of Plataiai, when Pausanias, still uncorrupted, conquered him. And look! Artemisia, the Halikarnassian queen. That is for Salamis, where Athens and Sparta still fought side by side. Yet even there—treachery. Naught great has been done since Marathon."

"Let it pass," said I. "Even to Marathon you came late: and in Athens were traitors, ready to admit the Mede. Such is human life. Shifting is it and never the same; and if you seek to find it true to itself throughout, you will lose hope and condemn it, methinks, for essential rottenness, which were impiety."

"Oh, flexible even as an Athenian! Your rule for right and wrong is leaden, and yields. You bend and elude and achieve your ends, exquisitely ever, yet by lies. Look yonder at our huge statue of the Lakedaimonian

People, stranger; a *man:* a warrior heavy armed. Not for nothing is *their* great image, shining over Athens, in woman's likeness, albeit a goddess. Them the Maiden protects; and something of women's wits have they, subtle, unscrupulous, and a woman's wheedling tongue. Flashing, shifting, lawless as the sea, is their wit; our mind holds the deep knowledge of the firm earth."

Down the street we passed, glancing at statues and shrines and sepulchres on either side; and, moving westward, it was a joy to read there the great names I knew, Brasidas, near the theatre, and, opposite, Leonidas, brought thither some years after his glorious death at Thermopulai, and buried.

"I have spoken harshly of your countrymen at times," said I. "Here is one whom I wholly honour, Leonidas."

As though awakened from a dream, he looked up quickly.

"Leonidas? no, no! He is buried yonder, out by their house, below Taÿgetos."

"But look," I urged. "See his name. See the spear, with the graven names of those who fell against the Persians."

"Oh, *that* Leonidas," he answered, abstractedly.

"What other?" said I.

He said briefly he had had a friend of that name. This snapped our conversation abruptly, and as I struggled to recover myself I realized that Archie was offering me some food.

"I thought you might like some cake," said he, holding out a curious, spongy substance, streaked with yellow, pink, and brown, and encased in chalky sugar icing. "And here's this."

I eyed the vivid crimson bottle apprehensively.

"Raspberry champagne," he said solemnly. "Rather decent."

"Thanks enormously," said I, and fell to.

"During the summer term," said he, "we tea down here. It's economical except during the strawberries, because brewing in one's room always comes expensive because you always have eggs or sausages or something. I say, come down and have a bathe after this is over."

"Right," I said. "I like your room this term better than the one last year," I added.

"Not bad," he agreed. "Topping view."

His room, as I recalled it, was a pleasant and masculine place, heterogeneous as to ornaments, but these had come more from affectionate patronage of leaving-auctions than from personal preference. A few photographs of friends and of horses; two placards of motors leaping through the air at incredible speeds; a picture of Miss Flossie Foljambe, smiling perseveringly across a film of dust. . . . Not the stage, evidently, was first in fascination for my respected friend. Else, a confused medley of books, athletic implements, and clothes, for Archie's tastes were manifold, and excluded neither Greek grammars nor picturesque pyjamas. Yet the relative austerity of the room interested me. Most of my friends added to the mass of steel and wood machinery exacted by the vast complication of modern athletics, half the equipment of a boudoir and of a fair-sized tie-and-shirt shop. Archie, too, loved luxury, but with a difference.

The spires of cigarette smoke I was blowing helped my meditation. The landscape swam a little, and after a pause, I asked him when he wanted me to come and bathe.

"After the games are finished, we shall find everybody

bathing," he answered. "To-day it is allowed. As a rule, one bathe a day only, but always. In the morning."

"Even in the winter?" I asked, shuddering. Hollow Lakedaimon, for all its sheltering hills, could be, I was sure, bitterly cold; and the Eurotas, though I didn't suppose it froze, must rush furiously, swollen by the torrents that streaked Taÿgetos.

"Of course," said he. "It is splendid, to buffet the current; to conquer across. But some are drowned," he placidly added.

"And after it, do you still wear that one garment only?"

"Nothing more," said he, hands still clasped beneath the unbleached wool.

"I could not suffer that," said I.

"We are taught so from the first. One dress, winter and summer: no shoes: yet, Makedonian, are we fleeter barefoot than the Athenians in sandals. And our food—black soup and bread; little else, save on the farms. Slaves may stuff: Helots may get drunk. See their blotched and puffy faces! That is right for them. *We* need no lamp to walk by, o' nights! They may lie, if they will, on fleeces: we have our bulrush mats. We are nobles: every true Spartan is a noble. He is self-sufficient, once, with birth, he has had training."

"Yet," I ventured, "I feel your training harsh. And what if the Helot should be trained?"

"The Helot?" He laughed, for answer. "And harsh? To some there is harshness in the casting sickly infants forth, to perish on Taÿgetos. But if a child lives and thrives, well, custom governs the soul. Straightway in boyhood the State's governor takes us from the soft care of women. We live in batches, and there is the whip to

tame us, are we restive!" He laughed again. "If he be absent, older youths, prefects, chastise us: failing these, any senior may rebuke us. Nor may we retort, or be angry. That were disgrace; and punishment were doubled. In no possible circumstances, traveller, are we left entirely to ourselves. Why, even when we pass into the military age, we go in herds, under yet other captains."

"Is your own home near by?" I asked, anxious to see the nurseries from which the lad so soon had been expelled.

"We passed it a moment since," said he, stopping, and pointing back to the quiet house he had crossed without a sign. It stood, with its fellows, outside the centre of the city, which consisted practically of the Aphetaïd street only, with black, narrow, and most ancient alleys running off it, one saw not whither. These airy, separate buildings, calm and noiseless, struck me with awe. Serene, unchanging, content with the old ways, they bred men to the loneliness of a life never lived alone, to the solitude of the soldier. But scarcely, to the interior isolation of the initiate? For what furious explosions might not lives, so massed back upon themselves, be concentrating their strength? Here, at any rate, were the houses of the Kings, no different from their fellows', with doors of axe-hewn planks, without knocker, so that here as elsewhere you must needs shout for entrance. But now we passed these, too, and descended to the Eurotas, crossing by a bridge out the Youths' Island, with its rampart of plane-trees.

"This is where we play football," said he. "Here Leonidas was killed. The game is a fight, to prepare boys for battle later. At that bridge many have been injured, by kick or tooth or fist, or even slain."

"But that is barbarism!" I cried, shocked, though a northerner.

"It is the custom," he said coldly. "It prepares us. It were shame to be odd man, left out because none would pick us; a craven at the hunt; in gymnastics, in the dance."

"Hunting and gymnastics are good," I said, "for they develop courage and the rhythm of the body; and song and dancing not only honour the god, but put rhythm into the soul. But your other games are destructive; and only the evil is that."

"No," said he, "danger sharpens the wits. He is praised who steals most cheeses from Artemis Orthia. He who fails must sing a mocking song against himself, a bitter jest. And many are flogged at her altar till they faint, or even die. For none laments himself. So too, when older, we are sent a-thieving, to establish courage and cunning; and we go secretly to surprise and slay the Helots, if any appear too strong or comely or rebellious."

"I do not wonder," said I, "that your gods and goddesses stand, in their images, spear in hand, and that your very Aphrodite goes armed! You nation of blood and war! Your patron Apollo is a warrior-bard: his lyre is harsh and angry, and he knows naught of wedlock."

"True enough," he said. "We are bidden be soldiers, and better than our sires. We have a game—the old men, or those who act them, sing, and the grown men and striplings answer:

ἄμμες ποτ' ἦμις ἄλκιμοι νεανίαι.
ἄμμες δέ γ' ἐσμέν· αἴ γε λῆς, πείραν λαβέ.
ἄμμες δέ γ' ἐσσόμεσθα πολλῷ κάρρονες.[1]

[1] Once we were stalwart youths.—That now are we; try us, an thou wilt.—But we shall some day be still better men.

For this, is all our training. Early from our homes; never in the market-place. Our very workshops are not ours. For this, we exercise our body from neck to ankle; for this, common life, common food, ceaseless inspection. We marry late; we ask from marriage children, not soft dalliance. Wherefore a husband rarely meets the wife who is but to breed him children unto Sparta: if she fail, she will welcome one to make good her failure; the aged or crippled husband shall himself seek a new partner for his bride. Throughout our City, we seek one colour, one mind. Each is like his fellow: we are peers. We live, we fight: money is for the trade-folk living round us: enjoyment and work are for slaves."

"Your life," I said, "is one long insolence to Nature, who will have revenge. Man was not made for himself only. Athens trains her wits; you, your limbs. Do neither of you know how to love . . . ?"

"Leonidas," he began, suddenly tossing up his hands. "The little fool," he growled, "swiping like that. Boundary, but deuced bad play. Downright swank. He'll be in love with himself over that stroke and send up a catch in a second and get out. Anyhow I sha'n't be in with him, thank heaven."

But the appalling thing happened. Leo batted quite steadily for an over, but his companion got bowled, and Archie rose, scowling quite too angrily, I thought.

"Why are you so sick?" I asked.

"I hate looking a fool," said he, "batting with that kid."

"Good luck, Archibald," said my other neighbour. "Pleasant innings."

"Go to blazes," retorted the inexplicable Archie.

"Why does Damer object to his fellow batsman so much?" I asked. They grinned and looked awkward, and offered me some cherries, and I subsided.

Archie, however, batted very quietly, and soon the rhythm of his strokes and the leisurely running entered into my brain, and the landscape flickered to my eyes.

It was the ripples of Eurotas that flickered there: the leaves of the plane-trees, with the sunlight filtered through them, dappled the water yet further into green and gold. Archidamos at my side was leaning forward, quiet again, and gazing at the waters.

"I will tell you about Leonidas," he said. "You know we elder boys are, if the gods favour us, each an 'Inspirer' to some younger boy, who 'hears' us. We are to speak to him more potently, they hope, than our austerer elders. You said we could not love . . . Love! I had seen instance after instance of what you, doubtless, would call love, and I had called it madness. Then came my turn. It was at the feast of the Hyakinthia. I had caught the lad's voice, singing in the hymn of honour to the hero. Oh, I knew him well enough: and I had observed sweet voices often. But now, somehow his daemon was in the voice—the he himself—though I could scarcely see him. My throat—my breast—I—well, I knew I must look for him as he descended the steps. Oh, Makedonian, I thought to see the hero Hyakinth himself, so golden, as he descended through the sunlight, was his hair; and his eyes were the blue of hyacinths. For the first time ever, I noticed eyes; and I saw how—how shall I say?—how his skin was woven. He saw me too, and blushed, casting his eyes down. Yet why? I had said naught. Some god had leapt

between us. And after that, I could not but seek him, not confessing my purpose, but cheating myself with excuses. But when he caught me looking, I frowned. . . . And on his side, he feared me, and sought me, and shrank, and we lived each out of himself, and in the other's mind. Yet we spoke not. And on a day, I was set next to him in a chorus, and he might have been Medusa, so would I not look at him, and I sang false, and my head whirled, and I was thought by the chorus leaders sun-stricken. And I would put in his place gifts, figs and other fruit; and once, a quail; and a tamed squirrel and a bow I had made. And he played with them openly before me, that I might see, but dared not speak, nay, not to himself confessed he that he knew. And another day I heard him speaking to his friend Kleomenes, my cousin, and 'O Kleomenes,' he said, 'deliver me from the anger of Archidamos, for he hates me. I am a hatred to him, when he sees me at the games, or hears me sing. On his account I miss the ball, I strike the note awry. Yet must I indeed never see him? for I love him, he is so strong and so powerful for running and in boxing, and leaping and throwing the disc. And once he kicked me—for he hates me—at football, and I loved him for it, and leaned on the bruised ankle the heavier. Oh tell me, my Kleomenes, if indeed he hates me. For my part, did he not hate me, I would be utterly his slave: I would be his Helot: yet would I be a god, doing all things well for him! Now, I do all ill because of him . . .' And Kleomenes came to me and said . . . but he came not twice!" he broke off harshly, and resumed at once: "And to Leonidas I spoke never. And he, he was killed in the game, because I being near he fell into distraction,

and was thrust aside and could not avoid the thrust, and was thrown askew, and his neck broke in its socket."

"In Makedonia, O my friend," I answered gently, "came once to live a philosopher, one of the race you envy, having somewhat of a deeper vision into truth, who spoke much of these things."

"What, then, did he say?"

"I cannot recall his words. But let us talk, and trust to our talk's guidance. Friendship, O Archidamos, he believed was of all things most necessary to life. In all that lives, is *that* which draws one unto another. Hence flocks and herds exist: hence cities rise: hence I, travelling, perceive each man to be kith and kin to all men."

"Nay," cried he, "I am no kin to Helots!"

"Even so thought he. Man may not love the aged, nor the ugly, nor the wholly disparate. And indeed, passion must first shake the soul, and passion is based on sweetness, and sweetness goes with beauty. Yet not always! Have you not often wondered, how such a one could tolerate for friend another so ill-favoured . . .?"

"Often," he said. "And even at Leonidas, some mocked. And I—what had I, what was I—that *he* . . .?"

"Hush," I cried. "In all that lasts, somewhat there is, though hidden, wherein twain may *share*. Is it that I have what you have, and love and join you in it? Or that I lack what you possess, you, what is mine, and so, contributing each to other, we create a whole? Thus the sage declared that princes could meet no love, for they lack naught, being princes."

"Alas," cried he. "They may lack this very thing, love! To Leonidas *I* was a prince. He had naught, he fancied, to offer me. Yet hungered I for him. Thus

might a prince love, yea, and love a beggar, could the beggar man give him love."

"Hence none, if they but love, need be too low to meet with love, nay, not a Helot."

"And none too high," he answered very slowly, "nay, not a god."

"Yet my philosopher," I continued, tempting him, "taught men to pray not too much good for their beloved —not, thus, that he should become a god. The gulf would grow impassible."

"Not," said he, "should one oneself move godward."

"Lo how you solve the riddle! Yet," said I, talking to myself, "if my beloved move faster than I godward, shall he not slay my love? No! for may I not love my memories? *Once* we were together, and equal sufficiently. . . . And ah! even should I sink backwards from the godlike, neither will his love perish. May he not love a *hope?* May he not love, to help?"

"I loved Leonidas," said he, recovering himself, "not from this reason or that, nor for this or that purpose, but suddenly, and absolutely. It was he! it was I! I live, not by choice or argument. Love is like life."

"Listen," I said. "The passion indeed, that must underlie and may pass upward into love, is swift. It springs from that blind thing in us which may not be destroyed. Thus you may find yourself shamefully— most of you would fancy—enamoured, yes! of a Helot, himself, perchance, unloving. There are dark myths in Hellas that dream of this: Pasiphaë; Europê."

"Hush," said he, "my mind is angered by these topics."

"Well is that," I answered. "And indeed, the passion,

springing as I said, comes swift and may go fleetly : but its triumph is destruction. My Archidamos, even its brief, trivial triumph that men jest at, is destructive. First, in the beloved, it is sweet unconsciousness that perishes. The self conscious, the strut, the smirk—how loathsome ! Intolerable he becomes, for very vanity, while still he is fair. Intolerable, for soured loneliness, when his hour is over. Thus, O lover, though you boast your guiltlessness, though shocked should one call you harmful, unguessing it you have murdered in your beloved somewhat most subtly fair, meant for his happiness. O fools, to think corruption is due to mere outside rape ! that, this lacking, all is well. Long ago, the elusive and all-important thing has been spiritually spoilt. A withered soul ! O Archidamos, a withering soul ! Again, in the lover, it is the use and enjoyment of the present life that first is lost : distracted is he, maimed for action ; daemons are in his brain. And believe me, he who squanders himself over such forms of passion-friendship, has expended all his treasures, and when in due time his whole self is demanded of him, and all his riches of love, he has nothing left to give. Meanwhile, among his fellows, that sacred thing, love, is being laughed at in its caricature, and all manner of hateful irreverence is shown to it, whereas of so delicate a thing no ribald tongue should speak, and on it scarcely the soul's eye look."

"Few among us dare," he said, flushing, "to bandy words about such as love truly. Base love we hate overmuch to laugh at it. All this talk, Makedonian, displeases me."

"Yet," said I, "these are growths in the soul's garden. Do not disdain them. Meanwhile, however, often the

passion turns to its contradictory, and he who once made you drunk with love now fires you to downright hate."

"So it was with my brother," said he. "He was Inspirer to Agesilaos; and then, on a sudden, lo, he could not bear his name. What is this?"

"Enough!" I said. "Love dawns slowly through the cloudy passion, or must live long, before it can be distinguished as love. Love based on profit is called love only by a lie: it dies with the profit's death. So love sprung merely from pleasure goes rotten when the pleasure sickens, and the soul falls apart into shreds of love and hate, and hard is it, once the soul is sick, to slay in it even a hated passion. The very sickness is loved, and loathed. May you never be slave, dear friend, to a sick pleasure."

"Whence, then, is love that is true and immortal?"

"From the permanent only, a permanent love issues. Hence to have dwelt together, forging links of custom, is helpful for most lovers; even, the sight of the beloved's face; for such are we, that what is not seen, is swift forgotten; and without the enshrining features, the enduring soul is lost to us."

"O Philetairos, what then is the permanent? For I still love Leonidas; though he is not with me, but the love is sweet. This love, then, sprung rrom sweetness, endures, though the beloved be gone."

"No, Archidamos. The pleasant is not, because it is so sweet, the evil. Nor indeed is Leonidas truly gone.... But wait! It is true that the good only is the lasting, for it is the real, the self, the essential. Sin is the destruction of the self: evil destroys the choice; it blinds the soul's eye. Evil seeks the easier, the looser, the indefinite. All life is effort, and effort makes for the harder. Now there

is a moist and honied pleasure (but its after-taste is rottenness) in ease; and a sea-salt pleasure, yet most tender, in the effortful, for life is energy, and the truest energy, if successful, means the subtlest pleasure. But in our inexperience we fall quick victims to false pleasure. We have all given pledges to false pleasure. It is our familiar. Ever then to the easier pleasure we tend, and become, by yielding, less effortful, less living, more nearly nothing. In all love, then, seek effort, and that will mean the painful, the self-conquering acquisition of the good, which alone is the real and the lasting. For mortals, mortal law of mortal love."

"One word only of your philosopher's do I retain," he said gravely: "'Distrust them who preach: Think mortal thoughts, O mortal!' and 'Humanity for humans.' *He* taught: In so far as thou mayest, play thou the Immortal. O Makedonian, you have told me how from the blind brute deep in all of us springs suddenly a mortal passion. Slay it you cannot, though, unmastered, it slays its victim and itself. And you have said how, by slow fellowship, and give and take, and training and austere renouncements, a grave human love may grow to glory, and share permanence with life. Oh tell me, is there not a love that may spring from deeper yet, even from this, that in each of us is somewhat that is God, imperishable, and that this love may be sudden, for Gods have no room for growth; and sweet unspeakably, for the God is happy; and permanent, though the body fail, for the God, which it is, Himself is everlasting?"

"My wonderful friend, you know the proverb that one need be lord neither of earth nor sea in order to do the right. And lo you here, no philosopher, yet speaking

better than philosophy ; an unknown lad in this corner of the world, with thoughts reaching beyond all stars ; a babe, yet how wise ! a stranger from how far, yet more at home in heaven than any citizen of Athens ! By favour of what God ? by what holy instruction ? Truly in each man's heart, God lives. And God, stirring and spreading in him, prompts him to strange actions and modes of being, unaccountable even to himself. Impulses, fears, contradictions, all unreckonable. Thus, under all strifes, it must be that the whole Universe of things is straining, pursuing ever, yet not what each fancies for himself, but the One. . . . And if in friendship, it be the divine which calls to the divine and answers, solved is the riddle, whether we love our friend for his sake, or for ours. For both, we love him : or rather, for the one and truer self present in him and me. Our friend is a second self, and only the divine is thus one in many ; only the utterly true and good. See how bad men hate and shun this true, lonely self. They fly themselves ; they seek change and Lethe ; they will try to kill their body at least, in the hopes of extinguishing the Self. But extinguish it they cannot, though they may starve or smother it. Self-seeking lust, love's parody, buries it thus in the accumulated unreal, sinful, and destructive. Effort, selfless work, rouses the dormant, realizes the possible, all but creates. For, I live in my work ; I work for my friend, and the life I never had lived in my idleness, I now create in him, and it is mine, and in him I live anew. True, man though tending thus beyond himself, is limited, and many loves seem difficult, and one seems best, and the law for man may be that he approach the One after his own nature only, and by the linking and the fusing of twain, not of many.

But what is clearest of all, is this, that between man and man, such a fusion cannot utterly take place, but only an approximation. For though the God is in us, yet am I not God, nor is my friend. But between me and God—ah, there one partner in the love is that very God, and though I may not myself *be* God, yet can He flood me so intimately with Himself that—that—ah, in these things are mysteries, Archidamos"—for Aristotle was failing me: I could not order him sufficiently, nay, nor himself had he been able to finish out his argument—"and when the divine mind spreads through a man's soul, not the rising of the sun upon the waters is so wonderful."

"Philetairos," said he, "I thank you. Yet needed I not your words. I have a secret. You know we Spartans love the brother-heroes, the Dioskouroi, Kastor and Polydeukês. We love to tell how, in the hunt, they are seen flashing by, tossing their tawny hair, with poised spear threatening the boar, and how, in the gymnasium, their limbs burn bright among our wrestlers and our runners; and, above all, how on winter evenings, at the fireside, in our old houses, Kastor and Polydeukês, the friendly comrades, the brother spirits, sit and warm themselves, and the sleeping babies smile to them, and with cheerful eyes they watch what their folk are doing."

"It is a kindly tale," said I.

"It is better than a tale," he rejoined, "and no mere winter's dream. Myself I have seen those Brothers."

He paused and sighed, and resumed.

"Myself I have seen them, clearer than with my eyes, and I know, now, that these two spirits, even outside the life of touch and sight, are linked with one another and with us, and are powerful in their presence, because of the

god within them. I have seen now how philosophy can talk—aye, most beautifully and hopefully, yet stammeringly—about man's love and God: perchance too much, perchance too little: always at the great moment it hesitates, when it seeks to tell the *how*. As for me, I *know*. Will you say it is the God in me who recognizes Himself in them? Well I know I am not a god: yet—at least, somehow in God lies the explanation. I cannot talk of it: love is best served by least speech. Therefore am I sure, though, that I may still love and be loved by Leonidas; and that though I cannot speak with him it matters not and perhaps is better, and I am content I never spoke to him, and never touched his hand. Love cannot lie; but words weave lies, and touch creates illusion. Yes, just because he is dead, and I have no memories to distract me, he is the closelier inwoven with my life. I live the bravelier for his presence; I sing"—he smiled—"the truer: I exult the sharplier in tingling Eurotas: I fight the better, for Death, clearly, makes an end of nothing whatsoever."

"'Most frightening of all things is death,' said our philosopher," I quoted, half smiling, "'for it brings a stop.'"

"Ah, poor philosophers!" he cried. "At the moment of moments, their light goes out. *I* know. . . . I have made trial. . . . Death begins!"

"Forgive him," I said. "His dearest book, to me—his wisest study of Pleasure and of Right and of Good and human life breaks suddenly off thus—'Let us then begin by saying . . .'"

He laughed and clapped his hands, and all around me the clapping echoed and grew, as Archie stalked serenely

in from the wicket, and, amid great applause, broke into the deprecating run of success. Evidently he had scored highly. I patted his back enthusiastically.

"After you with me," he said, wriggling away. "Let's buck up down to the river."

THE GODDESS OF GHOSTS

I

Ἦ καλὸν ἐκ μακάρων μυστήριον, οὐ μόνον εἶναι
τὸν θάνατον θνητοῖς οὐ κακὸν ἀλλ' ἀγαθόν.[1]

SEATED upon her throne, the goddess Persephoneia could watch, across the wood, the meadows of the Invisible Country. The throne was built of shadow; steps sank away from it to where the portals of her shrine towered like smoke into the black roof. From within this gloom she could look forth, through the twilit wood, into the yet paler fields. Poplars and weeping-willows made the wood, with silvery leaves and white trunks crusted with lichen. In the meadows, asphodel and hueless grasses swayed about the waters which a wind sent gently washing round the stems. What was the wind? The thoughts of men, that set the sick air a-stir, and the poplar leaves a-flicker, and the white grasses swaying by the pools: thoughts, drifting like grey shadows over the wide pools, and putting dim reflections and anxieties into the eyes of the dread goddess. For the ghosts could throw no shadows upon the wan grass, no glint upon the pools, and no surmise into the goddess's glance. The ghosts drifted helplessly, weaker than the

[1] "Fair indeed is the secret from the Blessed Ones, that for mortals Death is not alone no evil, but a good."—*Epitaph of the Hierophant Glaukos*, 2nd century A.D.

wind, with a sound of sighing, and no more. Once in a while some vague Achilles drove his chariot up phantom paths, or an Odysseus drew an unresisting bow to shoot, as of old, through the crescent-ironed axes; but no axe stood there; the spectral quarry vanished before the chariot; the ghosts hesitated for a moment, foiled, in fleeting bewilderment, sighing somewhat, and straightway forgetting and undistressed, for the mind was in them no more at all. Yes, only the thoughts of men, filtering through the mists, stirred in the filmy grass and the unsubstantial trees, and, in the eyes of the goddess, set vague images of things. Almost alone in the sombre goddess, the eyes livid, dark beneath her ashen tresses; perhaps her hands, too, lived,—long, faint hands; and round her chill feet cloudy raiment swept.

But, on certain days, the white mists above the meadows would swirl and eddy; for one, upon earth, would be digging the funeral trench in the soil, and slaying black victims to the stern goddess. And, through the mists, like a blackly-crimson dew, the blood would steal, a hot dew stealing and steaming downwards, and the ghosts, stirred by the sharp scent, woke into awareness, and came flitting in their thousands, shaken like bats from beneath the myriad leaves, the poplar leaves and the willows, lifted like soft, dusty moths from the asphodel and the waving weeds, where they had clung invisible; and faintly crying they would gather together towards the blood, ghosts of old men, and of maidens yet unwedded, of growing boys and strong men slain in battle; ghosts of aged priests, wise long ago; and of captains and of merchants, helpless and outworn, flitting all of them towards the human blood, the hot and crimson blood, falling like dew. And

the eyes of Persephoneia blazed black, and her long fingers she held forth that the blood might settle on them.

But at length, as men's hearts changed, tears too fell gently with the blood; and in the white grass, fronds faintly green unfurled; the warm tears stole tenderly among the roots, and, with the tears, hope shone palely golden into the willow wood. Hope kissed the steps of the dark throne, and the feet thereon. And when at first the anxious goddess was fain to send forth some Medusa's ghastly head to freeze into silence the disturbing thoughts of men, the intrusive, living thoughts, the undying gleam of hope forbade her, and shone upwards to her forehead and her heavy brows, and her long lashes. And she too wondered, and mused back into the past, and held up unwonted hands to Zeus on Mount Olympus.

And first, through the wan fields, there grew upon her gaze a greener field, a sun-golden meadow, where butterflies danced and kingfishers flashed round one who played, a maiden, running and playing and gathering coloured flowers,—briar-rose and violet; jonquil and anemone; iris and lily, and the hyacinth. The winds were warm and fragrant; the whole heaven smiled; and all about the place, lo! the deep voices of the ocean. And it was herself who played there, and was a maiden, with a maiden's thoughts and happiness. And at that the austere Queen marvelled.

And gradually, other voices sprang, like fountain jets, among the trees, voices of blithe children, whose Spring was at its dawn; of gentle maidens and young men, whom the bounteous seasons garlanded; voices of old men, harping upon harps, grateful for the long kindness of the Earth-

Mother, and trustful to Her for a life unquenchable and an immortal Spring.

And with harmonious voices all these then sang the praises of the Earth-Mother and of the Maiden, how Pluto, Death, carried off indeed the Maiden, and her Mother sought for her, leaving high heaven and turning to the towns and haunts of men, even her Mother lovely-tressèd, gleaming-gifted: for nine long days and nights sought she, holding torches in her hand; and without food and drink she went, fasting and weeping. And at Eleusis, by the sacred well outside the city, in the shade of olive trees, she sat down, like to an aged woman, the nurse of kings. And the King's daughter found her, and she became foster-mother to their infant brother, the son of Metaneira their mother and of the King. And on her coming, veiled head to foot though she were in robes of mourning, the whole house was filled with glory. Yet was she sorrowful and fasted till the dame Iambê prevailed on her to smile, and to taste the mingled drink of barley-meal and water and sprinkled mint-leaf. And the babe Demophoôn it was her will to make utterly immortal, dipping him in the fire, and re-moulding him immortal. Thus toiled the desolate Mother for her chosen one, but Metaneira beheld it, and understood it not, and feared for her baby boy, and snatched him away from the goddess who, she deemed, was slaying him in the fire. But immortal for all days was she fashioning him to be. And the transfigured goddess rebuked the wit and will of man, and returned to heaven, and fruit and grain perished from off the earth. Yet among the gods was intercession made, and Zeus did rule that ever in each year the Maiden should return, and live once more, and die never altogether, and

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that life should never wholly be slain from out the world. Then was the Earth-Mother comforted, and fruit and flower grew once again amid men.

In this manner therefore did the undying hope clothe itself in song; and, reaching her from all parts of the world where the Greek tongue was spoken, the goddess heard her own history afresh, and recognized, throbbing within her bosom, the life which, after the dreariest winter-time, should renew the Spring.

Maiden and Mother, the new-born flower and the prolific nurse of fruit, she perceived herself to be. From distant lands she beheld herself to have travelled, eastern lands, southern lands, wreathed with barley-beards and corn; from Jordan, from Nile, from immemorial Egypt into Attika thinly-soiled, changing her names as she approached, Isis no longer, but Korê, now, the Maiden, and Dêmêtêr, Earth-Mother. And as she worked with the men who worshipped her, she knew herself the clearer. Where the old King had welcomed her, there did she fix her dwelling-place, Eleusis, and held recurrent festival. To the Eleusinia all the countryside trooped to thank the kindly goddess; she taught Triptolemos to plough the soil, and at due seasons the favoured family of the Yokers of Oxen ceremonially tilled the soil with sacred oxen, imitating a model that was divine, even Demeter's, trusting that the life, driven into the soil when the goddess's hand first rested on the ploughshare, would, at their acted prayer, germ yet more generous.

The delicate blade sprang suddenly, and made one glamour over the red soil; forthwith Demeter of the Green Blade was hymned at the Chloeia festival, and a little later the goddess was praised for the shooting forth

of the slender stalk, and a whole month was named after it to please her, and colonists carried into distant Asia the name of the feast, and in Miletos Demeter of Eleusis had her temple, and her feast, too, of Kalamaia. But with the gracious Queen of Corn and of all grains, from other eastward countries, Dionysos, the spirit manifest in fruit and vine and ecstasy, had come forth ; linked in a mystic wedlock, Wheat and Wine were praised at the Haloä, and in the dawning year the inception of human life was sanctified by the celestial prototype of marriage. With many another festival did the golden goddess illuminate the yearly round of her good clients ; reaping and first-fruits, culture of green things and of orchard fruit ; tendance of ox and swine and swarming bee, over all did she extend her motherhood. Thus for all human life did the goddess come to trace the plan, and at her supreme feast she was hailed Thesmophoros, the Bringer of all Custom, and, dawning across the mists of an incredibly distant future, the Mother could behold her sons, a manly race who, true to their instinct, should worship her as Ceres Legifera, the creator and queen of Law. But in ancient Attika the goddess gathered round her to-day only the women, and those too must be married and of honourable degree and habit. For three days the mystic reunion was held in the Akropolis, and the goddess beheld her loving clients re-enact the old story of the Maid's Descending and Returning ; the fast and tears of the Mother ; the gaiety of the dame Iambe, who had recalled a smile to the divine lips. Over the fields were sprinkled the ashes of the sacrifice : through ceremonies, some ghastly, some solemn ; some ribald, some plaintive, and some painful, the goddess was invoked to send more and yet more

children to these women, fain to increase the amount of life, of that harmony so mysteriously blent of all these warring elements, in their Greek world.

But unsatisfied was the leaping power of life within the goddess that it should thus have sent its pulsations throughout the fields and olive-groves and vineyards, and into the very homes of her dear folk. Shrivelling winter blackened the farms, and from the nurseries little funerals went forth, and soon or late each man or woman, child of Earth, returned in all docility to the Unseen; and although, with the circling of the faithful year, the Maiden went forth anew, leaping and scattering flowers across the meadows, the divine Power willed that a life should spring up for man ever more like itself and more enduring. Therefore at Eleusis was a fountain opened which cried aloud that men should come and drink thereof.

First, the great goddess smiled to find that while at Eleusis the one Power was already worshipped in manifold guise, it was ever as to the sorrowful Mother and the Spring-bright Maiden that folk flocked thither most. Mysterious behind all forms, loomed the *God* and *Goddess*, unnamed, untitled, grave and immemorial inhabitants. Nestling beneath the Mother's temple stood the little cavern which was Pluto's shrine; and the Maiden's ravisher not only suffered his bride, so pale, once, amid earth's vaulted shades, to dwell, unjourneying now, in the sacred town, but himself, reconciled to the Mother, profited by his kingship over earth's hollow places only to send up the better those crops and plants which the goddesses so loved. The god of Good Counsel had his throne beside them; and with them too the Attic Dionysos, tamed from his northern youth of bacchic frenzy, a

peaceful fosterer, he too, of crops and fruit and vintage, a gentle shepherd of the dead. And lo, the very hymns of the place, rising through the echoing air like shining incense, the very essence of the long ritual chant, gathered into subsistent form and feature, was called Iakchos, the incarnate *Hail*, the absolute Praise, divine Exultation in itself.

Into this immortal family, human families were first caught up and in a sort immortalized. When first the Mother made her way to Eleusis, and in grateful courtesy entrusted her worship to the welcoming town, Eumolpos was one of its chiefest lords. To his descendants, the Eumolpidai, was entrusted the staffing of the service, and from them was chosen always the Hierophant, the aged man of flawless habit, of majestic air, of true voice for the intoning of the ritual formulae, of spiritual chastity and bodily control. Chosen by lot from the privileged few, he passed so wholly into the goddess's elect, that his very name, expressive of his unaided, earthly selfhood, lapsed; he became hieronymous; to the tossing sea was entrusted that older name, and in its gigantic baptism the human self was washed away. Ever more fully accepted as the representative of the goddess, escaping yet more perfectly from the coercion of law and the impertinent familiarity of social life, he would be regarded, one day, as the very image of that Demiurge, that Word of God, whereby the visible universe was made. Thus was the divine life grafted ever more profoundly into the human stock. From other clans, less closely affiliated to the Mother, such as the Heralds, the Kêrykés, were chosen other officers, the Torch-bearer, the Holy Herald, He at the Altar, the Sacristan of the Two Goddesses, the Escort

of Iacchos, the priest of the All-sacred, and a great company of dedicated women, who dwelt, devoted wholly to the Eleusinian cult, under the mantle of the goddesses their patrons. So in the land of Attika, where for the most part priesthood meant but the temporary right to perform a certain ritual on certain days, a right open mostly to all citizens, and importing neither spiritual nor moral preparation, nor consequences, nor doctrine, duty, nor mystic link with the Worshipped, came to be notable an elect Order of men and women, in raiment, dwelling, food and function wholly made over to a life with gods, initiated, and preachers of initiation. Even on the secular magistracy the reflection of the Eleusinian glory fell, and many a steward of the mysteries and lawyer of their ritual and casuistry, acolyte and sacrificer and musician, actor and poet, was caught up into the spreading network of duty and privilege cast from the gleaming temple.

For very bright and splendid was the goddess's home become. Year by year the sacred town grew more glorious: shrine above shrine was piled; on the foundation of temple after temple, burned by Barbarian or transfigured by keen Greek, or remodelled by clumsier hands of Roman devotee, ever arose anew the divine fortress of Life. To one journeying from Athens, Triptolemos first showed his temple, his altar and his threshing-floor; Artemis of the Gates had hers, and hoar Poseidon; the plain Rharia itself, where the goddess had so long since sown the grain, from whose imperishable crops the barley-cakes still were made for sacrifice, had too its shrine; and the well Kallichoros, where Demeter first was hymned by the country women, was so venerable that the stairs, rising towards the great gates of the city, swerved aside lest they

should cover it. Hard by, the Stone of Sorrow, where the goddess sat to grieve, was worshipped, and beyond the town, yet another well, Parthenios, marked where the goddess, in the guise of an aged crone, had rested on the road to Eleusis. Further, the lady Metaneira, mother of the elect babe, had her chapel. Ringed by these sacred memorials, the circuit wall of the city made yet another ring, at once a defence against invaders and a screen against prying and uninitiated eyes. For the very slaves who worked on the roofs and could peer into the inmost courts, must be initiated into the divine secret, lest their gaze should pollute the inviolable domain: and for those who forced illicit entrance, the penalty stood death. Within the circuit were found other sacred places, the little shrine of Pluto, the temple of Demeter, above all the Hall of Initiation, the Telestêrion, towering higher and spreading wider in successive generations, pillared, and surrounded, on the inside of its unwindowed walls, with rising rows of steps whereon three times a thousand clients might find room.

Towards this palace the glad goddess summoned a wider and wider population. Treaty-carriers, Spondophoroi, sped in every direction, at the period of the mysteries, to the cities of mainland Greece, to the islands starring the Ægean, to Egypt and to Syria. To the dwellers in Eleusis she added, first, the inhabitants of all Attika, then of the Greek-speaking race; gradually, the Mede himself and the barbarian. So, too, from the divine secret nor male nor female, nor bond nor free, were excluded; no necessary tale of years set a barrier to youth, and the Mother's courts were gladdened with the voices of young men and maidens, and to her skirts clung closely

a crowd of laughing babies. In the careful register of her home the name of each of these was tenderly preserved. Before the Great Initiation might be approached, the candidates must experience the Lesser Mysteries, of which the Eumolpidai and their trained catechists explained the detailed ritual. In it, the wise Mother had mingled much that was pathetic, much of a tenderly reminiscent homage, much of quaint, whimsical and yet alluringly mysterious, and some that was austere. Thus alone in Greece, she asked that her candidates would, through many days of preparation, fast solemnly till sunset, since she so once had fasted; and many a food, prized else as pleasant, the homage due to the pathetic history of the Maid and Mother cancelled. As the Month of Flowers hurried to its completion, the candidates first sprinkled themselves with the waters of Ilissos, at the temple of the Mother and the Maiden, built at Agra, by the brook, and the tale of Dionysos was transacted, by sacred mummers, in their presence. The summer heats went by, Boëdromion came round, and on the thirteenth of that mellow autumn month the escort of stalwart youths went forth to Eleusis to make guard-of-honour for those Sacred Things they were to transport to Athens. The procession was short, but of official splendour, and stately chariots followed the uncouth wagons, drawn by oxen in which the wicker caskets, purple-shrouded, reposed. In the suburb of the Sacred Fig-tree the procession halted. The Chamberlain of the Two Goddesses betook himself to the Priestess of Athenê, Goddess of Athens, and announced to her the Arrival. All Athens, officials and plain citizens, trooped out to welcome the sacred carts, and their veiled contents were stored in the Eleusinion of that town. On the 15th

the Hierophant pronounced the formula of exclusion—no one of unclean hands nor of ill-fitted or ill-omened voice must approach the sacred gathering, while for further cleansing, on the next day all those who hoped for initiation raced down from Athens, through the morning sunlight, to the harbour Phaleron, dragging with them the sacrificial pig with whose blood their ritual offence might forthwith be washed away. Ἅλαδε μύσται, "to the sea, ye mystics," cried the priest; "To the sea, ye mystics," hallooed the crowds in answer, the cheering crowds, watching the reeling racers and the gross lumbering of the victims. "To the sea, to the sea," shrieked the little Athenian street-boys, perched on the long wall binding Athens to her harbour, dangling their legs, knocking heel on masonry in time to the *seawards! seawards!* shout. Thus through the veins of all that populace the strong blood pulsed; the healthy body and sound brain feared the impact of no emotion, nor shrank lest it might find its sense of awe impaired by an interwoven laugh, nor its worship of the sacred and invisible made difficult by the honest acknowledgement of the real. Tingling with their keen plunge into the sea-water, the Mystai returned to the town, and awaited, in ritual purity and retreat, the 19th of the month.

Throughout the day the long procession crawled from Athens to Eleusis. Heaving at its head, the statue of Iakchos, who gave his name to the whole day's ritual, concentrated in itself the spirit of the whole *cortège*. Hedged by the chosen youths, myrtle-crowned, and armed with lance and shield, and by the prancing cavalcade of knights, the Sacred Things, their staff of clergy and the white-clad Mystics followed. After them poured all

Athens, headed by her governors, divided by tribes and parishes and families. Ladies drove in carriages, rivalling each other in their pomp, yet not wholly eclipsing, but rather enhancing the mysterious modesty of the goddess's wains. Crowds upon crowds of poor and of slaves, driving asses burdened with those necessaries that the slender resources of Eleusis might not furnish, concluded the gaudy, clamorous troop. Bridges must be traversed, traditional scenes of ribaldry and democratic chaff; chapels of gods and heroes claimed a halt, a prayer, a sacrifice or solemn dance; when Rheitoi had been passed, the first hint of the neighbouring religion showed itself in the palace of Krokon, the ancestor of one of the sacred families of Eleusis. There, in his honour, the mystics bound their right hand and left foot with a saffron fillet. At last Eleusis appeared in the shadowy westward background, and, to the brilliant light of innumerable torches, the *Iakchos* dance around the well Kallichoros concluded the long day.

But by now the Divine Hostess of Eleusis, ever more powerful to give as the will of man asked more of her, took over the devotees into her own world and they were no more their own. Already she had shaken their personality to its foundation. The goddess of grain and fruits had bidden them fast; with lightened brain and with disregarded body they had accomplished the pilgrimage which uprooted them out of home and accustomed circumstance, inattentive utterly to what mostly would have proved exhausting and bewildering. Yet was their excitement no random or unguided scourging of emotion or violence done to thought; for, every incident their Queen had governed by the expectation of herself; every

rite, trivial, crude, grotesque, had been transfigured by the significance she and her example had imparted; every incident of the journey, every station, pointed to Eleusis, and now in the sacred dance they circled round the mysterious walls within which they were to penetrate on the morrow, there to hear words and to behold a spectacle which they were never never to violate by speech thereof amid men. They lay down to sleep knowing that on the morrow was to be initiated an intimacy with the Divine which, for each individual, should transfer, once and for all, the weight, the importance, of existence, from these brief years of variegated life on earth, into the uncharted lands beyond the grave. Yet uncharted no more should they be nor perilous, so mighty a knowledge and so sure a power was to be given them on that morrow.

The twentieth day dawned, and the morning was spent in a high solemn sacrifice of oxen, mastered by the chosen band of youth and offered by the Priest of the Altar. Rest, and visits to the sacred and traditional places of Eleusis filled the afternoon. Dusk came, and in the outer courts the goddess prepared her mystical repast. It was her own food, sacred through the centuries, that she offered: her antique draught of water, meal, and mint-leaf, and cakes of that grain which was herself, fashioned into significant symbols of fecundity. From one wicker basket and another the Mystai took the simple yet meaningful food, and forthwith made declaration that they had done so, and were crowned, fit for further admission into the companionship of Those who had deigned already to share of one nourishment, the substance productive therefore of one life, with their worshippers.

Thenceforward no barrier was set, save those made

necessary by the shackles of the body, to full communion with the goddesses. In the gay flowery Hall the initiates danced with the Maiden and revivified her glad girlhood. The dreadful gong, struck by the Hierophant, reuttered the ravished Korê's cry ; darkness fell ; wailing with the Mother, the unanimous crowd sought the Maid, lighting new torches, learning the meaning of Demeter's devious wanderings and fasts, and of the kindness done, in her person, by humanity to God. By them the Maiden was once more discovered ; by them brought back from Hades ; the sacred repetition, by them, of the history of the great goddesses, ensured to them (they already knew) a sympathy, an association, which should outlast earth's life.

And, indeed, forthwith after their co-operation in the rescue of the Maiden from the dark land into the light, they learnt, in mysterious anticipation, what should be their own itinerary in that hidden world. Even as at Eleusis Herakles and Dionysos, the godlike and the god, had themselves learnt courage and wisdom to face the journey down to Hades, so now the humblest of the goddesses' children might learn the same lesson and gather a like strength. This was the true initiation to which the drama of Korê's rape and return was but the necessary preface. And again darkness wrapped the Telestêrion, and in anxious procession the Mystai trod the long road to Hades. And lo, divergent lanes, and, at the branch, a white cypress tree, and a fountain which, for all their parching thirst, they must not approach. And on the other hand, a second fountain, whereof they were soon to drink. And they perceived that the throng of men, the uninitiate multitudes, pressed to the forbidden source, and drank of it, and it was the Fountain of Forgetfulness, and or

truth and beauty and of right they became forgetful, and hurried down black paths, and wallowed in hideous sloughs, and consorted with serpents and hateful birds, and lived in hell. Terrified incredibly by this vision, the shuddering Mystai, sweating fear, turned to the right-hand source, and lo, it was sentinelled by Guardians. And to the Guardians they made humble answer at their word, "Who art thou?" saying, "I am the offspring of Earth and of starry Heaven; yea, I am of heavenly descent, and that ye know yourselves. I am parched with thirst, and I perish; oh, give me quick to drink of the cold water that flows forth from the pool of Memory." And the soul drank from the singing pool, and then passed by the ghostly cypress into paths of myrtle and rose and honeysuckle, and into glad vocal fields and talked with gods, and at the very gates of the innermost shrine saw, not the goddess yet herself, for that, till death should dawn, was still forbidden, but that ultimate symbol of the goddess that none others ever of living men, save only the initiates, should behold, and, from the sudden dazzling glory, flung from the holiest place, a Knowledge and an Assurance was struck into their souls' essence that no further drinking of life's oblivious streams should ever wash away.

With this memory in their hearts, the Mystai were fain to depart contented. Not before another year was passed might the Initiation be completed. Even so, this completion was but an enriching, a deepening of what the goddesses had given. They had no new grace to bestow that should surpass the substantial pledge of their friendship, and promised salvation at the terrible hour, and ecstatic fellowship for ever.

True, the revelation of the second year, which accorded

full vision to the devotee, had somewhat of austerity which even the ravishment of the Maiden into death had lacked. Just as in Egypt the linking of the soul with Isis was followed by its mystic identification with her slain Son, Osiris, so here, the murdered god, Dionysos, was displayed to the faithful in his tragic career of desolation, rejection, dismemberment, and restoration to life. Isis gathered the scattered limbs of her beloved, and he became king among the dead: even so, Demeter gathered once again the tortured flesh of the young god, and he revived and reigned, the great, the marvellous, the supreme mystery of the full Initiation. In these words ancient narrative described the ritual symbol in which this drama was consummated:—and again, the "Lifting up of an Ear of Wheat, reaped in silence." It was the God, the slain, yet the indestructible, the food of man. No word was necessary, here, to reveal to the instructed soul this mystery.

Together with this came the crowning manifestation, even more promiseful of life, in which the Mother, Demeter, was seen given in marriage to Zeus, the supreme Father of Olympus. Thus was no hesitation left in the soul of the worshipper, but he might see and believe that through the Mother he was knit up with the supreme source of life, Zeus Himself, and that when the Hierophant proclaimed in awestruck tone that the Queen, the Strong One, had given birth to a holy child, the Strong, he knew himself, with an unshaken faith, to be in a true sense that child, imperishable, sacred, established in life for eternity.

And at last the goddess, seated in her temple of Eleusis, beheld the yearly pilgrimage, and saw at her feet the mighty men of the centuries, the merchants, and the

philosophers, and the artists, and the world's supremest head, the Emperor of Rome.

And she exulted in her life, she, giver of Life, and knew that she had dipped humanity in the sacred fire, and that her adepts were for ever immortal and inviolate.

Then on a sudden, a chill air came from the East, then again, more rapidly, from the West, and from the South, and the torches flickered, and the initiates were troubled, and surmised a fearful future, and the promise paled in their eyes, and in the gaze of the goddess a mist gathered. And on a sudden, her torches wavered, and then flared, and then, within the least of little times, went out. The sacred cup was spilt, the bread fell to the earth, the stricken priests and holy women went shuddering down the silent road to Athens: the great gates crashed and a seal was set upon them. Nettles grew in the sacred place; toads sat upon the altars; the pillars groaned, and turned, and the roof tottered. And suddenly again, a hurricane swept from the north, and a flame, and the Temple was burned, and the Hall of Initiation fell, and the goddess, for a brief space, with eyes half-seeing beneath her cloudy hair, with smoke-hued raiment trailing in dim woods and by hideous marshes, the goddess, a shrinking guest in peasants' cottages or in the refuges of aged priests, whispered questioningly to the few who listened of an endless life and happiness—and lo, even these failed her, and in a few secret haunts of antique horror, a road was made for her, back, to the hollow places of the earth, and in mist-swathed meadows and in woods of sterile trees her sad throne heaped itself, and for a while, upon her sick hands, a bloody dew stole downwards; and again, this ceased; and in her eyes light died.

II

When Elinor Pontefract arrived at Paimpol, Regarded P. Barnet met her with his motor-car and took her out to Kerouël, where his château was. Miss Alsatia Barnet, aged eleven, to whom Elinor was coming to be governess, was present as chaperone, and pointed out the different features of the country with distinguished self-possession. Alsatia took an entirely accurate view of life in general and of governesses in particular. She had had many, and she saw at once that she would approve of Elinor.

"You're *different*," she announced, after ten minutes of polite discourse. "I can see you're a *dear;* and I'm just going to love you."

Besides Mr. and Mrs. Barnet and Alsatia, Elinor would have to meet the two sons, Hardicanute and Duke, and at the time these names, sharp, somehow, and angular, seemed inappropriate enough to the two unknown young men, yonder somewhere in the grey hills.

For the motor-car was tearing its way through a ghostly scenery of dim grass and granite rocks, from which the afternoon light, white and watery, seemed to have washed the substance. Doubtless, in the hollows stood heavy woods of chestnuts, and, by the grim houses, apple-orchards; but shadows effaced the woods in the sunken places; and elsewhere everything, the gaunt granite no less than the stretches of coarse grey grass and faded heather, seemed drowned (Elinor again and again told herself) in a light reflected upwards from the unseen Atlantic and then filtered spectrally downwards from the pale grey sky. Just brighter than the sky, just more milkily iridescent, the

Atlantic showed, for one brief moment, through a division in the hills: but it could never be forgotten.

Probably anyone will feel, on entering upon an entirely unknown world, upon a space in life where places and persons are new and probably unlike past experiences, a certain sense of unreality, a lack of adjustment of himself to his environment, a lack of continuity of action with that imminent future. And since for the most part one remains real to one's own self, and consciousness is rarely reduplicated so as to make one's very body, its behaviour and words, seem alien and distant, an acted show to be watched with half-focussed attention, it is as a rule merely the outside world which seems dreamlike and unconvincing, to be suffered quietly until vital inter-communion shall return. So for Elinor, not all the sonorous onrush of the motor-car, not Mr. Barnet's burly figure at the wheel, nor Alsatia's crisp and unchildlike comments, could free her from the sense that she alone, at this moment, was real, and that the millionaire and his small daughter were but ghosts in a ghostly world.

Yet as the car crashed over the shingly lake which spread between ill-cropped grass before the château, the sun came out for a moment, and green and palely-gold reflections stole like returning consciousness into the wan face of the world.

The château was of a very ordinary type, and only a superb flight of curving steps added dignity to its façade. White, with high-pitched roofs, and with its four pepper-pot turrets at the corners, it turned innumerable windows towards the drive, the ragged grass, and the rolling country ; its back looked to the gardens, and then woods, and finally the downs which curtained the Atlantic.

At the head of the steps stood the reassuring figure of Mrs. Barnet. She wore a heavy black skirt, a mustard-coloured and rather ragged jersey reaching almost to her knees, and some startlingly fine diamonds, though it was only afternoon. You would immediately have noticed, too, her splendid ill-dressed hair, and her astonishing kindliness of expression.

Mrs. Barnet smiled broadly and kissed the girl on both cheeks.

"I think you're *too* sweet," she said, satisfied with Elinor, as Alsatia had been, in one penetrating glance. "I want that you should feel you've got a real home here at the château."

"I see that its châtelaine means to make it so," said Elinor, smiling in return.

"The château," pursued Mrs. Barnet, noticing at once that not even the motor-drive had flushed the tired girl's cheeks, "will give you back your colour. It's the *duty* of everybody who can, to have a colour. And you're English, and the English always can, if they're looked after!" Her own looks, she knew, were nothing except at night. Then the torrent of electricity lit up her very talk into brilliancy.

"First," she dictated, "you shall see your room; and then you shall have tea. I don't drink tea myself, not in France. But it'll be better for you than liqueur. Then you shall put your feet up and we'll chat."

She led her away through the wide and bland apartments, with their panelled walls and Empire decoration.

Even tea, served in a parlour almost modern in its cushioned comfort, failed to restore Elinor's complete grip

upon reality. Clearly the journey must have tired her excessively: Mrs. Barnet's voice still sounded distant, and her words pattered upon Elinor's brain as though it were outside herself, like leaves whistled by sudden gusts against the window.

Lying on her long chair Elinor could watch the iridescent park, where the falling twilight put all manner of tender shadowy veils upon the shivering poplar trees and pines. Beyond, lay meadows white with mist, and the grey hills melted into the scarcely paler sky.

"Of course, my dear," Mrs. Barnet was proceeding, "you'll like that I shall be quite frank and simple with you. I know you're a Catholic and all that, and I know how much you must want us all to be too, and I'm sure I don't wonder *at* it. Oh, dear, if only I'd been *born* one, as I always tell Barnet! But I couldn't change! Never. Not as his wife, I couldn't. You see, I have a position. And then—well, long ago I thought I might; and if I'd been born one I should have stayed one, of *course*. But *become* one—well, after a certain time one just can't. It just wouldn't be *real* of me. Once, I was telling you, I did so want to be! At my lovely convent of course all the nuns were longing to make me one, and what with the lovely chapel and then Benediction and your beautiful Virgin—well, what I always say is, she's *mine too;* my! you should see the flowers I send them in May. She's mine, too, and you mustn't grudge her to me: everybody's always had a lovely Mother in Heaven like that to help them; look at the Egyptians with their Isis and the Romans with their Juno and I don't know what all. You ask Barnet. He'll show you his own special one. *He'll* explain. I know you don't take it quite like that; and Barnet sha'n't bully

you—he's terribly learned, you've no idea. Oh, he's quite unlike what you've been thinking of him. You wait. Well, you think your Virgin's something no one has but you: but she *isn't*. We've all of us *got* to have her, and that's the fact, my dear. I've got my own little religion, you know, though it isn't yours on the outside, and I don't talk about it. But you be sure that wherever I see anything that's beautiful and that helps, I just *take* it. Why, when I saw this dear old house, I knew at once it would make me right down *good* to live in it, and so I just said to Gardy, 'Take it,' and here we are. And that's why I take your Virgin, only you mustn't take my Alsatia, to come back to the point. I spend all my time trying to be good and helpful and make other people feel good, but just you don't take my Alsatia away from me, my dear! I couldn't have that, not yet at any rate. And I don't really believe in French or Italian marriages for Americans, and a satisfactory English Catholic it's *very* hard to pick up. So if only you'll keep your religion away *in that sense*, you'll find me ever so kind, I do hope."

And she looked at Elinor, as across a bridgeless gulf, with her unfocussed eyes of a kindly millionairess.

The evening pursued itself calmly, and Elinor went early to bed, waking up into a tingling, sunlit air, brisk with the breeze.

"Now this is your first day, Miss Pontefract," Mr. Barnet announced at breakfast, which she had refused to take in bed, "and you're just going to learn your bearings. And I'm going to do the honours myself, and run you round the estate. And since it's Saturday, you'll like to see where the church is, I don't doubt. I'll take you down there this morning, Miss Pontefract, and you can

find your own way back, or come back with me, exactly as you please."

She was touched at this thoughtfulness, just as she had been by the dainty Friday dinner Mrs. Barnet had mindfully ordered for her last evening.

"We feel," said Mrs. Barnet, "that though we can't pretend to be Romanists, of course, we ought to give good examples to the peasantry. We don't go to the morning Mass, because we feel they wouldn't like it, somehow; and anyhow, I'm sure *we* shouldn't; I don't know why. I think there's something odd about your Mass: of course I go at my friends' weddings or funerals and all that, but somehow it makes me feel so *small*, your Mass does! It's so old and so odd, and it simply doesn't care for little people like Barnet and me, though the rest of the world attends to us *some*. It won't suit itself to us or even explain itself, and you can't spoil it, my dear, not even you Romanists, with your worldly music and your solos and programmes and your celebrations in drawing-rooms. Ah, I've watched you at it! *I*'ve seen you! But we go to the evening service. That's more for all of us, I think."

"Yes, we feel we ought to do something to observe Sunday and give example, Miss Pontefract, y'know," he resumed. "I can't say I'm pious, but I always change my clothes for lunch on Sunday, and have the curate or something like that up for a meal. It's the *vicaire's* turn to-morrow; good little chap, Miss Pontefract, and all over you English. Talks it. Queer little fellow. You'll see him. In fact we'll have 'em both up, in your honour. Very well. Shall we say at ten o'clock?"

At ten o'clock they started. They saw the motor-

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house and the dairy ; they visited the rather bleak Italian garden, bright enough with its formal carpet-beds and hedges, but hopelessly out of keeping with the rolling Breton scenery from which its balustrades divided it. Driving a small pony-cart up a road unfit for motors, Mr. Barnet took Elinor to the downs, and lo, on a sudden, the Atlantic, a dim blue, like the blue on the wings of certain butterflies, a blue just veiled in invisible black, a blue in mourning. The downs sloped towards it, and broke into black rocks, sparkling beneath the sun. But in the village itself, into which they dropped, all was mellowed, crusted, austere and yet friendly. The cobbled streets and the grim houses were grey enough, almost sinister with their black gaping doors : but every house, almost, was festooned with delicate blue nets enriched by the wallflower colouring of the corks, and the same rich russet followed its way through the streets and the quays, browner always in the leggings or coats or bérets of the few sailors there, and tawny even to vermilion in the decorations on the sails of fishing smacks. But not till evening would the scene find full animation. Then in the splendid sunset the fishing-boats would return in their scores, with their rigging golden. Even in this summer-time, when so many were afar in the northern seas, the sunset homing of the fleet was a manifold loveliness.

Elinor's spirits rose and she felt altogether a different woman as she jolted down the steep streets and looked about her. Never in her life, perhaps, had she made any deliberate effort to attract or conquer anybody. But she always unconsciously assumed that she was welcome, and without a shadow of intrusiveness her smile was immediate and for the most part irresistible. Before the

morning was over, she had made half a hundred friends! Whenever she saw an old grandmother sitting in the sun, her rosary slipping between her fingers, her heart leapt with Catholic delight, and she smiled her way straight into the old dame's soul. She could have held out her arms to take any one of the brown babies carried by their sturdy mothers through the village; she laughed outright with glee at the pleasant little statues of St. Anne, St. Yves, St. Joseph, by door and window; she wanted to kiss her hand to them; she loved their homeliness—that was it! she felt herself at home, in the Catholic fishing-village; she was in among her own, a traveller returned; she felt herself real at last, in a real and welcoming world.

"Oh!" she cried more than once, "It's the real thing! the *real* thing at last! What *good* luck to be here!"

And Mr. Barnet, delighted, was convinced the girl was happy to have voyaged, to have come to a new country, merely read of, hitherto, in books. And he envied the freshness of her soul, which, for pleasures long since to him insipid, could shine through her eyes like stars.

Having arrived at the little church, Mr. Barnet remained outside, from good feeling, but declaring he had to hold the pony, whom not the last trumpet would have scared. Elinor, still in her mood of childish exultation, dipped her hand, on entering, almost to the wrist in holy water; she lifted the unaccustomed priedieu and placed it, just for the joy of the un-English action, in another position. Then, recollecting herself, and not looking anywhere around her, she bowed, and adored the undeparting Presence. "The *real* Presence!" she repeated to herself, hugging the formula. "The *real* thing! It's all *real*, to-day." Then she knelt erect, and peered

about. She saw, and understood, and approved the model ships hanging there from the roof: in a hundred votive pictures Mary and St. Anne appeared, blue-habited, shrouded in cloudy splendour, to relieve the sick or intervene in accident, or still the storm; and she invoked these names in their beloved French tongue. Nets festooned the columns; she inhaled their scent of tar, and it was only less fragrant to her than the memories of incense. She bowed again, and then made pilgrimage to the many statues, invoking each imaged patron as she halted, even when she failed to recognize him. "Grand Saint sans nom," she prayed to Saint Benoît Joseph Labre, the beggar man, still unknown to her, "ayez pitié des pauvres; faites que je sois pauvre d'esprit." "Douce Sainte," she whispered, before the dim statue of Ste. Françoise d'Amboise, the royal nun, "bénissez les petits enfants; bénissez les jeunes filles de cette paroisse; bénissez ma vie de pauvre institutrice et faites que je reste petite, et humble, et reconnaissante—ah, certes! reconnaissante."

She lit a candle before Mary and the Crucifix, looked lovingly at the muslin-capped heads of two or three old women, bowed in prayer, and returned to Mr. Barnet.

His mood, while he waited, had changed.

"You'll excuse my saying, Miss Pontefract," he began, after a long pause, "that I regard yon church you've just left as the workshop of illusion. I hope I've not taken you aback."

She certainly was startled. However, her habitual necessary self-control did not fail her, and she answered almost lightly that for her part she'd been thinking that it was the one place in the world where everything was real.

He reflected upon this in silence.

She resolved to startle him, in her turn, the least bit in the world.

"It's one's ordinary life, don't you think," she suggested, "that is so unreal? The realest things there are, are birth and death, after all, and marriage and I suppose money. And yet one only talks of death in round-about phrases, and one isn't supposed to talk of birth at all. And society decorates and disguises courtship and marriage till no one knows *what* they mean—at least the girl doesn't. And nobody tells the truth about their income. I don't suppose even you do."

"Upon my honour, Miss Elinor," said he, looking at her, "you're a very unusual young lady."

He was glad to see she made no mock-diffident excuses for her volubility or her frankness.

"Thank you," he added, "for not saying: 'I hope I haven't shocked you, Mr. Barnet.'"

She was silent, and he on his side felt infinitesimally, but justly, snubbed. The girl, then, knew what was possible, to a hair's breadth.

"I mean," he resumed, with heavy brows, "that what you see right now of this village is illusion. And what they go into that church to look for is illusion too. It's a pretty place to you, to-day, this; it's a neat thing, what with the nets and the flowers and the comic opera staging of it all. But wait till the wind blows and the colour's gone. How many of those children'll ever see their fathers? Down they go, under the icebergs; the grey sea gets 'em. Oh, it's a dreadful thing, Miss Pontefract, a shuddersome thing, these fishermen's life. The unlovely boyhoods; the coarsened adolescence; the drunkenness

and the violence of the men—what harbour but is full of their traces? And the harsh virginity, the brief wedlock of the women: then, the waiting, waiting, waiting; and then the early widowhood, and the waiting all over again. No wonder Brittany bristles with Calvaries; and the churches are never empty of the black cloaks and hoods. They *must* have a drug."

"It's something," she said, "that they do find happiness. Or at least strength to suffer."

"It isn't strength," said he. "The men cave in. Look at 'em directly they leave Brittany. They collapse. They go to the dogs in a fortnight. The women—well, like all of you, they're tenacious. They can stick out suffering as men can't. But in their minds they're fatalists. They know as well as I do that the Atlantic's at the back and the end of it all, and their very songs echo it."

She listened in astonishment to his meditation.

But, as the pony-cart jolted up the hill he began to hum a melancholy little tune, and then gradually took up the words

Nous avons vu partir nos pères
Pour les grand' pêches meurtrières

He broke off, and resumed:

L'Océan les ramènera—Lon la!
Chantons lon la dérideras.

"I *don't* think," he added, with the brutality of a suffering, unbelieving heart.

Nous avons vu notre grand frère
Chantant bien haut pour se distraire,
Qui buvait les pleurs de ses yeux
Avec le cidre des adieux . . .
L'Océan le consolera—lon la!

"Ah," she cried, "my poor Bretons aren't so cynical as that, surely?"

"How you respond!" he said, gloomily. "Hearken some more."

Nous avons vu notre grand'mère
A genoux au pied du Calvaire
Prier la Mère du bon Dieu
De lui garder son dernier fieu—
L'Océan le lui gardera!

"Oh," she said, "but it's a cruel song. I'd no idea . . ."

"And as for the sisters—as for their 'accordés'—well, 'L'Océan les épousera.' There is a Monster for you! a Fate! That's the only certainty. Even the children know it, in their dreams. . . . 'Et dans les lits-clos, sous les buis bénits, Les tout petits gas se sont endormis. . . .' What do they say in their dreams? here is cruelty! the relentlessness of the too wise child, Miss Pontefract!"

Nous avons vu nos bonnes mères
Verser des larmes ben amères . . .
Nous les ferons pleurer aussi
Quand nous partirons loin d'ici . . .
L'Océan nous endormira—lon la!
Do do, lon la, déridera . . .

She protested no more, but remained silent till they reached the crest of the downs and had begun to jolt down the further side and entered the château property.

"In a moment," Mr. Barnet said, "I will show you something which will interest you. I'm sure you read Greek history?"

"Just a little," she nodded, glad of the changed subject.

"Well, remember all you've ever heard of Persephone and Demeter and Nemesis and Fate," said he, and again her spirits sank a little, though the intrusion of these

ancient names and notions into the living scenes she had been contemplating seemed quaint and perverse.

On the slope of the hill, to their right, stood a fenced grove of cypress-trees, a dead black patch upon the grass. Mr. Barnet hitched the reins over the gate post, opened the wicket, and ushered Elinor into the grove. She stepped a few yards down the sanded path, turned abruptly to the right, and stood astonished.

The grove was really a dense-walled hollow oblong. Inside the fence of trees a low white marble parapet ran round all four sides, with a space, by which one entered, at the nearer end. The cypresses too parted on the left, and framed with solid black an enormous view, the more elusive and ghostly for their blackness, a grey-green rolling country, the fields tinted cruder green and brighter yellow, flecked with poppies, doubtless, and white farm buildings, yet phantasmal and almost shocking in their silence and immobility. The middle part of the oblong was filled with a marble tank with a narrow marble pavement running round it. Along the near end of the tank, by a little bridge, stood a semi-circular marble bench, and confronting it on the extreme part of the enclosure, rose a statue, white against the cypresses.

"Can you read," said Mr. Barnet, "the inscription on the pedestal?"

She stooped forward a little—"Pale"—she began; "Ah," she cried, "I know it, of course:

> "Pale beyond porch and portal
> Crowned with calm leaves SHE stands
> Who gathers all things mortal
> With cold immortal hands.
>
> The Garden of Persephone!"

"You read Swinburne?" he asked, flinging himself heavily on the seat, while she went slowly round, her hands hanging clasped in front of her.

"Rarely," she answered, and then added, with a touch of malice, "I find him a little too Victorian."

"Victorian!" cried he. "You are the most astonishing young lady; you really are. Whom d'you find modern enough for you, if Swinburne's too old-fashioned? You really are quite interesting. Come right here and sit down."

She looked at him a moment and went on, slowly pacing the marble.

"Come on," said he, his face thickening. "Come right here."

She made up her mind to it and sat down at the further end of the bench.

"Explain the statue to me," she said lightly, "and all this little garden."

He laughed a little, and pulled himself together.

"You know about Eleusis, of course? Very well. That's Persephone, the Maiden. I wanted the British Museum Demeter and she's even more august, sitting there with all the majesty and the misery of Earth in her eyes . . . but of course I couldn't get her. And then my idea changed. I said to St. Leger, 'Make me a Persephone.' . . . The *Ewig' Weibliche*, the Αὐτοτάτη, the ultimate Maid and Wife and Mother at the back of the whole cosmos. For, of course, you'll credit me, Miss Pontefract, with the sense to see that the All-Force is to be conceived as feminine. We know, of course, that it is neuter, or rather a transcendent Both, a Brahma, a Pan; and Jupiter and Jehovah have failed, as symbols; even Diony-

sos, even Osiris doesn't go far enough. Persephone is still a potent emblem ; Persephone, Isis, even the bloody Kali, even—yes, even Astarte, credit me. The unreasoning craving which is responsible for this world-process ; this savage thrust, through pain, from unconsciousness into reproduction and relapse, is best seen as virginity and motherhood,—oh, a Moloch-motherhood, no doubt, devouring its offspring ; but an eternal cycle of life and death, victorious each in turn ; no new life without the rending and destruction of its first swaddling clothes ; no death which doesn't manure the fields for an irrepressible new birth."

But Elinor's sense of humour was recovering itself. She smiled with the tips of her lips. He didn't notice it, and went on.

"Really, my Persephone is that Ultimate. Look at her. Sexless, ageless, in reality nameless. Death, Immortality, Eternity ! That is what is real ! What, in moments of utter desolation, is more reposeful to the soul than the notion of the Unconscious, the Eternal ? The peasants are allowed to come here to meditate. The wicket is not locked. After storm or drought, or death of a child or a husband, the women come here to sit on this bench and contemplate Persephone and find repose. It is America's gift to Kerouël. I, the utterly new, recognize the force and meaning of the most ancient of all, and I give them this statue, this musing place, in honour of Eternity."

Elinor laughed outright.

"Oh, Mr. Barnet," she cried. "They won't want to come ! Believe me, they won't want to. They know better. I'm an ignorant and impressionable girl, and you

showed me that perhaps I didn't know the Bretons, and you made me miserable with your song; but they're Catholics, you know, and so am I, and I know how we feel inside about this sort of thing, and, honestly, you don't. Oh no, you don't, not one little bit, though you're so learned, Mr. Barnet, and can bring great statues from America and plant cypress groves with Greek marble colonnades on a Breton hill, and . . ." She broke off.

"I see," said he, injured, "that you don't want me to show you how *this* is the real Catholic religion, what I've been telling of, Miss Pontefract, not your restricted symbolization of It. Yet even among yourselves are Initiates. *They* know the Secret Doctrine. Just a few of you—oh, not necessarily the Pope himself, though his position's necessary. Just a few of you know what the Hierophant knew and told; what the Great Souls among the Indians and the sages of old Egypt knew. The secret tradition! Yes, charming as you are, you don't know it, Miss Elinor; and I should be most justly excommunicated if I tried to initiate you into the truth. The infallible Church is ever most tenderly mendacious for the sake of the Man in the Street."

"Please—please—please?" she cried, smiling still. "Don't think I've never read about the Gnostics; and I've read quite a lot from the Theosophists; and even the Modernists! I won't have one word to say to you! *voilà!*"

"Not even curiosity will move you? Then please will you notice," he said politely, "how neat this little place of mine is made. See those indentations on the marble path around the pool? They're modelled from the

chariot-tracks still visible on the Sacred Way from Athens. And this little bridge? When the Eleusis procession came to some streams called Rheitoi, it had a bridge made for the priestesses carrying the Sacred Objects (I won't tell you what they were, Miss Elinor . . .), but since chariots were forbidden to cross the spring, it was purposely made just too narrow to admit any. The accounts still survive, carved on marble. And this is just the same size. Ah, I get the whole thing up, Miss Pontefract, when I turn my mind to it. I get right *there*, all the time."

He showed her other antiquarian oddities and then they trundled homewards.

III

Next day both *curé* and *vicaire* presented themselves at the château as twelve o'clock was striking. The *curé*, an old Breton royalist, was as gentle and retiring as the *vicaire* was voluble, but both had been profoundly impressed by the piety of the *institutrice* at two Masses, no less, that morning, The *curé*, with unerring flair, perceived at once that here was no bouncing bourgeoise, proud of her place at the château, but a lady as refined as any of that old school of perfect courtesy which he was watching die. Generous, simple and honourable as he found the present owners, nothing would cover, for him, the difference—the enormous difference. . . .

But the voice of the energetic *vicaire* was dominating the conversation, and one by one the party stopped talking to listen to him.

"Mais, Mademoiselle," he was saying, "it is for me the realization of a dream that an English should come to

live in the parish. I adore the English ; one finds me a little English myself—at times a little *too*. . . . Thus I am—I am *fou du sport:* I have an equipage of football ; but ah, Miss, these children ! they find it so hard to be held apart. Impossible to keep them at their places. All, they wish to kick the ball and all the time and everywhere. Impossible to teach them they must wait. And as for the cricket ! Too long ! too long ! They expire, in waiting their turn. They are too ardent ! Meanwhile I do my best. Even in the exterior, I follow the English. Thus I—how ?—*je porte la raie* [and, indeed, his thick hair was parted and not cropped]. I made some bicycle until Monseigneur forbade it, and in fine "—here his voice rose shatteringly into the tingling silence—"I have English passions !"

Into the pause which followed Mr. Barnet advanced.

"You know," said he, collecting the eyes of the whole table, "it's an amazingly interesting thing to an outside observer like myself to have at my table Monsieur the *vicaire* and Miss Elinor Pontefract here alongside of one another. How so ? Why, now just you examine Monsieur the vicar [the unhappy young man, for all his aplomb, positively shuddered. He adored the Americans ; but Mr. Barnet could be alarmingly frank at times ; and as for publicity, well, in his own parish it didn't matter, but here . . .]. Here's the *vicaire*, French, Breton even, lover therefore of tradition, *le comme-il-faut*, *le convenable* [Mr. Barnet delighted in these Gallic interludes, but the *vicaire* writhed], committed to the old religion by birth and breeding and temperament, with the seminary in his blood, and the soutane sticking closer than his skin, here's the *vicaire*, I say, feeling something astir within him which

tells him all that's a dream; and he rides hell-for-leather after English ways and even American, and introduces cricket, and sees to the drains, and improves the cider-system, starts a savings-bank, and little by little he's going to turn the Catholic Church in his neighbourhood into a going concern, put it on a sound social and philanthropical and even financial basis; he'll hustle: he'll get a move on the Bishops, yes, *sir*. And meanwhile the *curé* sits tight, seeing quite well the whole thing's Protestant. But Miss Pontefract here, she goes prowling backwards. The Pontefracts, M. le Curé, you'll like to know, go back till the Lord knows when; forgotten even how to pronounce their own name and call it Pumfret; and Miss Elinor, she goes back after them, back even to the old religion, and 'verts to the Catholic Church, and comes here and is all over the dear French peasants in a minute. Loves the holy water and the *priedieus* and the rosaries, and upon my word, M. le Curé, I shouldn't wonder if she were as royalist as you are."

"I am accustomed, monsieur," said the old priest, in his exquisite, vanishing French, "to see these things go by and disappear; even kings. But you must forgive me if my loves are loyal. The happiest of my life was bound up with those to whom the memory of the ancient *régime* was dear; nor can I now root out of my heart the gratitude and respect of so many years. Yet not for that do I fail in sympathy with my young colleague, whose ambitions, you will pardon me, my dear monsieur, are far from Protestantism. I am fain to keep a fresh mind, and to adore the Spirit wherever I believe that I observe His action."

"Monsieur the Curé," said the millionaire, "you make

me feel real mean. You're too big for us. I apologize, *vicaire*. Let me offer you some chicken."

"'Ush!" cried the excellent young man, "do not mention it. And thank you. I would prefer . . ." his roving eye lit upon the beef, reassuringly English, "I will take a little—er—cold flesh."

This ghoulish proposal reduced even Mr. Barnet to momentary silence, during which the domestic, in his striped waistcoat with black shining sleeves and huge white apron, busied himself with plates.

"So Mademoiselle is *convertie?*" said the *curé*, perceiving that the family was slightly ill at ease, yet not realizing the rather *farouche* reticence of most English folks as regards their spiritual experiences.

"I have had that happiness," she said quietly.

"And I have often wished to ask a convert," resumed Mr. Barnet, "what exactly it is turned their thought to religion. Now here's my chance. Though you're a girl, Miss Pontefract, and I confess a girl's mind baffles me. At least, about religion. Now take a young man. Take Hardy or Duke there. [These two youths, about twenty-four and nineteen years old respectively, very groomed and reticent, displayed a complete serenity, and continued peeling peaches.] They could tell you. At adolescence a youth is an aviator. An aeroplanist in life. *You* know, *vicaire*, how it is with aeroplanes. You sail merrily along, until on a sudden you get into an air-pocket. A hole in the air. Then you drop; or you tilt; and the devil knows what'll happen if you don't get *through*. Similarly, a young man gets into an air-pocket; can't control his life for the time being. Then whatever eddy's going, twists him round. Perhaps an illness; nerves especially.

Knock off exercise and let him travel. Or a woman. Ask Hardy about that——"

"Here, I say, Dad," broke in Hardicanute. "Just slow down a bit, d'you mind? And what's Miss Pontefract been doing, anyway? What'll she be thinking of you, if you can't let her alone the very first week she spends here? I heard all about you, yesterday."

"Don't rag him, Knut," said the younger boy. "Dad's all right. He knows. He sees Miss Pontefract's all right too. She's *it*. Won't turn a hair. Though if you *should* want a little friend, Miss Pontefract, why, put me right along beside you, all the time."

"What'll happen to Duke," said Mr. Barnet, regarding the serene youth with disfavour, "when he gets into *his* pocket, Heaven knows. But he's quite right. I liked you directly I saw you, Miss Pontefract, because I perceived you were courageous. You downright enjoyed my driving of the car. Alsatia told me; and I felt it. And you didn't flinch yesterday. You won't climb down, however terrible I am, *you* won't, now will you, Miss Pontefract?"

"I don't know, Mr. Barnet," she said demurely. "When are you going to begin?"

"K.O.," murmured Duke, without lifting his eyelids. "Regular pile-driver."

"Drop your slang, sir," said his father, scowling. "And now to proceed, Miss Pontefract. If it's not sickness or a woman, it's religion. And if you don't beat religion, it beats you, and you're done in, for the rest of your life."

"So you look on religion as a kind of microbe?" she asked, since he paused.

"Exactly. Which you must have been predisposed to take. Now, did you take it, if you'll tell me, in the intellect, or morally, or spiritually? It's always one of the three."

"Why not a little bit of each?" she asked, smiling.

"Because people aren't usually susceptible all round," he said. "Either they feel they've got an argument. . . . Women don't take to arguments, true; but you might. All right till the next man goes one better.—Or they feel they *need* it. That works till they get a sweetheart.—Or they see visions . . ." he waved a vague hand.

"I still think it was a little bit of all three," she averred.

"Ah," said he, changing suddenly and stooping forward. "So you saw visions. You confess. What was yours?"

"I once saw a man killed," she said, "and somehow, I don't know why, it altered all my feeling about life and death."

"Yes?"

"You practically said, didn't you, women were bad at logic? Well, now you'll think so all the more. I felt life was the only thing that mattered. And it was *life* which I thought I saw in Catholicism. It was alive."

"It was alive; and so are you. No! the connection's sound enough. You *had* to live. That's good for *you*. But," he added: it's the *Church* which is the very deuce."

"Why," she said, "that was one of the great arguments which helped me. I saw the world dying, too, besides myself. I wanted to help them—oh, so much! To burn up all the sick old stuff! To rinse out the taint . . ." her eyes lit up. "Only life cleanses an organism like that."

"Oh, Miss Pontefract, Miss Pontefract! you're a

dangerous girl. Thoroughly dangerous. As long as you keep these things to yourself, it doesn't hurt much. It's your safety-valve. But once you start meddling with the ordinary man, whose business in life is to make dollars, you're dangerous."

Mrs. Barnet, suddenly struck by the idea that the devouring Elinor might want to interfere with Alsatia, here arose.

"*And* about time," drawled Duke. "Come into the garden, Miss Pontefract, and we'll show the *curé* the roses. He's all over flowers."

In the garden, however, he tactfully left the rather breathless girl alone with the priest.

"The roses are already falling," she said.

"But the harvest is good," he answered, "and the apple-gathering will be fine. The good God has given a fruitful year."

The girl, stimulated and slightly nervous after her enforced prominence, was quick to descry the allegory.

"Does it matter about the roses?" she asked, half hesitating whether the priest would follow her.

He murmured a little couplet:

J'ai vu mourir la frêle rose;
J'ai vu mourir la fleur d'amour.

"Oh," cried she, "thank you for reminding me of that dear song. I might have known you knew it. Even in my poor England I have loved it." And in her turn she quoted:

J'ai vu mourir la fleur de gloire;
J'ai vu mourir la Fleur de Lys.

"Our King and Queen," he said, lifting his wide hat, "are in the hands of the Eternal. They live where even the flowers do not fade. Here, roses, even our French

lilies, are the passing forms of the undying thing. Accustom yourself, my dear daughter, not to fix your will upon forms. Despite the continual death, life is immortal and the harvest indefectible."

In the months that followed, Elinor found that she easily accommodated herself to the atmosphere of Kerouël, in which the only really restless element was Mr. Barnet himself, and he was often absent. Alsatia behaved with extreme *savoir faire*, and of the imperturbable Duke she saw next to nothing. He read, went away for week-ends, drove his own motor no one knew whither, and reappeared without a hair displaced or the slightest alteration of his pink mask. With Hardicanute, however, she had more to do, and with the full approval, it appeared, of Mrs. Barnet, went quite a number of walks with him, or was driven by him to neighbouring villages, and even made all-day excursions, with Alsatia as duenna, to the show-places of Brittany.

By herself, however, she often wandered up to the cypress-garden, and grew accustomed to the steady gaze of the goddess, and came to know the impressive, heavily-draped image in all its moods.

For, with the changing hours and the passing away of summer, with the alternating weather, sunny, boisterous, and mellow with autumn mists, the statue's mood too would change. At times the golden afternoon would dye it too golden, and the goddess stood, a mother of gleaming fruits, bounteous, nourishing, the eternal power of Earth to create, self-sufficient and sufficient for her children. Once, Elinor saw her there by moonlight, a silver goddess, veiled in tremulous light amid black cypresses. Earth fell

away. What secret consciousness, alert amid the shadows, might not be ready to welcome the brave soul who should free itself from matter, strip off the carnal encumberment, and venture forth into the Unseen? Oftener, though, and ever more often as the days grew paler, the statue stood with blind eyes and irresponsive hands; the water in the marble tank, rocking slightly, put wan reflections, as of a momentary thought, in the face above it; but for the most part she stood there, the Unconscious, the Unintelligible, the blind force expressing itself in forms unchosen, undirected and unpermanent.

One day Hardicanute found her there and sat down beside her on the marble bench.

"I'm astonished you like this place," he said.

"Your father brought me here my first day," she answered. "I certainly didn't expect to want to come back. But it fascinates me."

"You don't say?"

"Your father said it would. I didn't believe him. But then he thought the peasants would like to come here too. And that did seem so ridiculous."

"They do drop in, sometimes, on their way down to the house. Of course they think it's the Madonna. They say *Aves* to the statue. But they prefer the old Madonnas they're accustomed to, of course. And quite right too."

"Of course. Yet it's nice of you to see the 'of course,' Mr. Hardy, and that it's justified. I don't believe your father would, do you know?"

"I expect you find him rather hard to understand, don't you, Miss Pontefract? He isn't really, once you've got the key."

"It's just that I haven't got. I see him all in slices, as

it were. First—you'll forgive me, won't you—ever so nice and bluff and humorous. Then so hard and materialist—I never can forget he said the ordinary man's business in life was just to make dollars. Then again—well, so harsh and despairing ; and *enfin*, such a visionary! Obviously it's not all to be reckoned up equally, at the end ; but the difficulty is, which part am I to discount ?"

"None altogether. To begin with, though he'd stare at you if you hinted he wasn't modern—you *did* flick him so, Miss Pontefract, when you told him you thought Swinburne a bit old-fashioned ! He still thinks him the last word. He told me in the smoking-room that evening. He couldn't get over it. Victorian, you said, didn't you ? Well—*he* isn't our generation. I am."

"Of course you are," she said, smiling.

"Well, but I mean the difference is enormous. To start with, a whole lot of hereditary elements seem to have been emptied right out of me—of *us*. But they're still in him. D'you know why he's called Regarded ? Well, a Puritan ancestor of ours—you know father's side goes back a long way : we came over sort of Mayflower period, you know—well, this ancestor was awfully anxious to have an heir and so was his wife, and at last a son was born and she exclaimed, 'The Lord hath regarded the lowliness of his handmaiden.' Well, you know it was often the custom then to take a sort of omen-word and make a name out of it. He didn't think Lord or handmaiden exactly appropriate, and though he was a pious old boy lowliness didn't appeal to him. So he called the boy Regarded, and the eldest son's been so ever since—till me. Well, he's got a strongish dose, a downright strong dose of that sort of Puritanism in his blood, Miss Pontefract."

"I shouldn't have thought him a Puritan," she said, half to herself.

"Oh, he's not that, you bet he isn't ; it's got nothing to do with behaviour, not necessarily," said Hardicanute, quite coolly. Then he suddenly recollected himself. "It accounts for a percentage of his mysticism."

"I see. I recognize what you mean. It's Evangelicism, as we called it. And it's practically dropped out, nowadays."

"That's right. Rinsed out of us. Bible, Sunday, family prayer. All that. Finished."

"But that's not *all* about him. That doesn't account for—well, all this." And she waved her hand towards the cypress and the statue.

"Of course not. But, you see, we'll assume that the mystical element in him—in all of us, perhaps—had to work out somehow in any case. And, further, had to take revenge for his materialism, his cult of the dollar. Bound, not only to work out, but to break out. It broke out into this. Why? Because, of course, he doesn't *believe*. He possesses the evangelical touch only as an aftermath. A glow when the sun's set. He's Huxley and Clifford and all that, and even more materialistic. So he's got to work mysticism in with the materialism. He's got no use for ordinary Christianity. But where faith goes, magic, or charlatanism, or theosophy of some sort or other comes in. Dionysos, if Christ won't do. He *couldn't*, at any time, acknowledge Mary: but Persephone, the Absolute Feminine, Nature, oh, anything you like, cheats the human craving or something after her model. Cheated, he is, poor Gardy."

"It is so odd to me to hear you talk of your father by a nickname!"

"Why?"

"It sounds disrespectful."

"It doesn't to me. It's affectionate. We're good pals, he and I. I've no illusion about him. I see through him—well, far easier than I do through Duke. But I'm jolly fond of him. That's why I hate to see him fooled. He's crammed his head with masses of third-rate science and history and religious theories and antiquarian stuff and God knows what else, and the result is he's taken in by the first fanciful system that comes along—Lord, what he says about Indians and Egyptians and Persians and the rest of 'em is pretty well the limit, it really is that, Miss Pontefract. And it's all sheer bunkum. Bunkum, and you may take it from me that's so."

"I think so, too, to be honest," she said. "And I've told him so. Though it was impertinent. But he didn't seem to mind."

"He'd like it. To start with, he likes courage. And we all know you've got courage, Miss Pontefract."

She blushed a little. By this time, she felt, her story was common property. Everybody knew she'd been tossed out by her father when she became a Catholic; all her clothes, her very toys had been sent after her; she had lived for a month at an old nurse's, and then had fought for a starveling wage as a typist, as clerk in a charitable office, and as governess. Mr. Barnet had had to be told, and Mrs. Barnet. Now everybody knew, and the myth was growing, and with the myth, she grievedly reflected, the halo. He went on quickly.

"And your being a Catholic helps, really. He simply

bars Catholics with the dollar-making side of him. There's no injustice he's not guilty of, when that's uppermost. But at other times he's always messing about Catholics, and trying to persuade them they've got a secret doctrine he knows, or anyhow which they don't; he tries to hitch on all their ceremonies to an esoteric Buddhism and what not, and I know he gets 'em both all wrong, yours and theirs. I do so hate to see Gardy in with such a trashy lot. My Lord, Miss Pontefract, if you saw some of the specimens we have to have at our house, especially in London. And the Inner Circle afternoons. . . . And mother just accepts it all like a bird."

"What exactly does that mean?"

"My dear mother's a darling. But of course she's no background. Doesn't go back further than my granddad, and not too much of him. And never reads. But lovely hair; holds herself so jolly well; lovely hands, too, don't you think? And a splashing of all the arts. But no background. Admires Gardy no end; likes us quite a lot; awfully kind hostess and fills her position in life to a T. And there they are. And here's we."

"And what about your brother?"

"Oh, Duke's a very dark horse. He's already the next generation beyond me. Five years younger, you know. We move *quick*."

"Except him, then, you see through it all, Mr. Hardy?"

"Yes, I think so. Mind, I don't see what's back of it all. I don't see the Real Thing. . . . But I see through all his generation's wares. I'm *us*. I'm the modern product. We've got beyond the materialists and the biblical critics and the Socialists even; and, by Jove, though we'll enjoy the products of the man who believes in money and

spends his life making it, upon my word, we don't believe in money either."

"Do you believe in anything?"

"I think we half believe. There may prove to have been some sort of spiritual Fact behind it all, even in it all, and even—yes—even pulling it well together, and forward. Sometimes in our innermost hearts we rather half believe that . . ."

"And do you hope at all?"

"Not very much," said he, his hands clasped about his knees, and his eyes upon the goddess, flat and amorphous, now, in the fainting light.

"What do you *just* hope?" she asked.

"I *just* hope," he said, his voice deepening as he turned and looked at her. "I *just* hope that some day we may be able to lay hold on your Catholicism. That, of course, or nothing. No man of the world hesitates between competing faiths. No one doubts that *if*, *if* we *could* catch hold, it will have to be on Roman Catholicism."

"So it's a question of will?"

He hesitated, and, while he lingered, the last true daylight died, and the statue stood, a pale silhouette, a shrouded, indistinguishable form.

"Almost worse than that. It's a question of *wanting* to will. It's one further back than willing. It all comes back to this. Here's the world and its history; how am I to interpret it? As the shifting product of the human spirit? The creation of man's thoughts? Or less than that, the innumerable forms endued by the Unconscious effort? That at least we seem to see. Or must I construe it as God's work and will? The dreadful thing is, it seems so easy to take the latter course, and yet, I don't

want to: I just watch. I'm interested; yet in a way I'm unhappy. I make experiments and get no forrarder. I dissect, without even expecting to find a soul. I don't have to work, else I might be forced into something of a *passion*. . . . Yet work might coarsen and harden me, who knows? As it is, I have, if not passion, oh, the most delicate emotions—oh, quite often."

"You mayn't have faith or hope," she said. "But it's clear you need something to stir your love."

He glanced at her doubtfully, but she was quite unconscious.

"Since I've been here," she went on, counting her own thoughts, "I've been tempted—I can't say how intimately—to see as true just what you have been saying—that it's just our choice whether we interpret the world this way rather than that; and that I say my Christianity is the one reality, *the* real thing, and that all these other forms are *mere* forms—or almost mere forms—anyhow, human symbols for the divine something at the back, simply because I choose to. Oh, Mr. Hardy, a bitter, bitter temptation, I assure you. I never had it before. Before I became a Catholic, well, I was all taken up with becoming one. Afterwards, I had to work till I was too tired to think, and my one consolation was in my religion. All life seemed cut off from me in the ordinary sense, and religion was the one comfort and strength. Then here, —well, I'm too comfortable. Alsatia's so good and Mrs. Barnet is so kind and you're all so successful and serene and it all goes so well, and religion does seem just a hobby; a thing you take up or don't take up; and what *does* it matter *what* you think of those old distant things? And then again, all life seems a ghostly affair; *afterwards* is

the one real thing that matters *utterly*; and I can't drop it. Why not? Well, I've been dipped in the fire."

"What?"

"I've been reading up Demeter's legend," she said, smiling. "She dipped the baby in the fire and was making him immortal. That happened to me. I *can't* drop it now, or take the other view. It's *in* me. And, do you know, your mother, just like Metaneira, was afraid Alsatia would get dipped, and won't let me breathe a word about religion to her."

"Couldn't I be dipped?" he said, leaning towards her.

She drew back a little. The movement flicked him.

"Elinor," he said, resolutely veiling his anxiety with his drawl, "d'you suppose you ever could manage to marry me?"

She got up, really a little frightened.

"I won't let you answer," he cried, without rising, but catching her by the hand. "Think about it. Meditate on it. Could you ever manage that? I've explained myself and told you what I am: and what father is, and mother. You know what you are—as modern as I am, but immortal too. Oh yes, the Eternal's dipped you. You share in that. You're the immortal Catholic. D'you think you could marry me? Go and think; go and pray. It's *the* one problem of our age. We're a problem, Elinor, you and I. Solve us!"

Laughing, and hand in hand, they ran down the dark but gentle slope towards the house.

"How really ridiculous you are," she panted, still laughing. "I haven't said yes: I haven't said anything. You're absurd and you know you are, Mr. Hardy. I'm going to forget about it. It's all the statue's fault. She hypnotized

us. We're both a little mad. Go quick and dress for dinner."

"You'll never *forget*," he said, solemnly.

She was sitting in the little votive chapel above the cliff, and trying to recollect her thoughts. From time to time her eyes wandered round it. The chapel was quite tiny, and cruciform. The head and arms of the cross held each an altar. To the left stood Mary, with the holy Child in her arms. He in His turn held the Chalice with the Bread, and about her skirts rose wheatsheaves. Orange-golden glass flooded the place in sunlight. Beneath the figures, ran the quaint rhyme :

Notre Dame des Blés,
Nos moissons protégez.

To the right, the chapel showed black hangings, and two windows were paned in violet. Mary stood there, lifting holy hands for the souls in Purgatory, figured at her feet. The legend ran :

Douce Mère des Morts,
A vous, Vierge, mon sort.

Above the high altar stood once more Our Lady, habited as Queen, and the verses prayed :

Notre Dame des Flots
Gardez nos mâtelots.

All manner of votive offerings tapestried the walls, many of them models of ships, little nets, little bits of wreckage, a compass, a telescope. Others were toys and nursery appliances : a pathetic rattle, and several dolls. There were wreaths in plenty, and everywhere, everywhere tiny hearts. In Elinor's ears the offerings spoke, the hearts

beat: from all over the world, throughout history, hope and gratitude set, like a great tide, towards Mary.

Behind her the Atlantic, which the chapel faced, moaned and tossed and summoned lives and gave them back for a brief space and then reclaimed them. In imagination she could see before her the long distances of France, where crops came and went, perished and revived, passing, like those who sowed and harvested them, into the food of the world's life. But the men, she knew, entered into an imperishable city. . . . She knew? Yes, and at this moment she made her act of faith. She had been dipped in the fire; she *could*, being immortalized, make the great venture, and live, with assured ease, the seed of Eternity within her.

Meanwhile, the remainder of her daily life must be arranged for.

Looking at Our Lady of the Dead, "I must live," she said. "I must shirk nothing in my life. I mustn't shirk!"

Her eyes sought Mary, Star of the Atlantic.

"I must help!" she murmured, bowing her head. "I must save my generation. I must contribute to it, give *myself* to it, take it to my heart."

On Our Lady of the Wheat her eyes rested finally. The enormous perspective of the future unrolled itself before her.

"I must be a mother!" she murmured, hands at heart.

Outside, as she passed homewards, on the very brink of the cliff, the great Crucifix, dead white with scarlet wounds, looked out to sea.

"And in all this," she acknowledged, "somehow I must die."

For one moment, the cloister dawned upon her thought. She kissed the hard wood, and arose singularly light-hearted and refreshed.

"But what I'm to do with poor dear Mr. Hardy," she said, smiling, "I wonder who in the world can tell me?"

THE FAUN

In Lebensfluthen, im Thatensturm
Wall' ich auf und ab,
Webe hin und her !
Geburt und Grab
Ein ewiges Meer,
Ein wechselnd Weben,
Ein glühend Leben,
So schaff' ich am sausenden Webstuhl der Zeit,
Und wirke der Gottheit lebendiges Kleid.

BASIL CROFT went slowly down the stairway to the terrace. The stairway was so broad, and the steps so shallow, that a mule could have mounted them with ease ; and in fact when the villa and its gardens were being built, the stucco vaulting had echoed often to the crack of whips and to the stroke of ironshod hoofs. But nowadays, in the old Italian Villa, there was silence save for the murmuring of innumerable waters. It was his great-grandfather who had bought the seventeenth-century Villa degli Alfagnani, and Basil loved it, because melancholy was in his blood, and the villa had been dear to him even before his wife had asked to come and die within its vast, pale rooms. Built of the local stone, and sheathed only in part by frescoed plaster-work (for the original owner had died before it was finished, and his heirs had never cared to live there), it turned southwards and westwards walls of tawny-grey, where the scaffolding-holes still gaped undisguised. That narrowed down the centuries to but a little time : you might almost

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hear, at the sunset hour, the clinking tools, and the folk-songs of the workmen, at their work and at their labour till the evening. . . . But now a night had come, and no man worked there any more.

But the true miracle of the place was the garden, falling in steep terraces down to the Campagna. From the topmost terrace, running the whole length of the villa and beyond, the enormous view was to be seen framed by the tortured arches and frail pillars of two porticoes. Ferns unfolded exquisite fronds from the crannied stone roofs, draping the fantastic architecture with loveliness. From the next terrace-level, great cypress-trees and pines made a final austere framework for distance beyond distance of golden light. Gold-green, gold-lilac, then just golden-grey stretched the Campagna. To the right, a few hills and towers sprang into individual prominence ; to the left, the ridges undulated gently and disappeared ; but, before one, lay no more than the golden tremulous tints of endless country, and, a faint blue touch on the horizon, the Eternal Dome.

But to Croft the view was alive with discomfort and unquietness ; the Dome caused him genuine panic. He had shut himself up at the Villa, after his wife's death, with his little daughter, until the outer world of broad spaces and free movement had grown from unfamiliarity into bewilderment, and then into horror. Yet in the midst of his fear of it he longed for it. "Outside," he felt, the world would be too much for him ; yet, here inside, the world had narrowed itself so far that it was killing him ; he grew blanched and sick in the shadows of the garden, and talked only with its ghosts. Spasmodically, his body and intelligence would revolt, and

demand a man's life and reality: but his sick soul would soon reduce them to submission, chafing a little, but quickly apathetic. Only, the summoning of the Campagna and its gold light had power to break the spell of the crumbling stone and antique foliage of the garden ; and most of all, above the floating distances, the Dome stood, a reminder of reality, and could not be got rid of. He hated and feared it, as shattering the world of dreams in which alone he could live till he should fully die.

Built into its present scheme, long since, by Cardinal Scipio degli Alfagnani, the garden was, in reality, older by fifteen centuries; for, in the making of it, walls of Roman masonry, mosaic floors, and all the proofs that exactly here had stood a Roman villa of the Empire, had been discovered. And already it must have been famous for its fountains ; for a whole network of lead pipes had been unearthed, and in one place the water was still carried through the old Roman tubes to a Roman dolphin. From its nostrils two slender jets curved upwards and fell pattering into the stone basin just as they did when Hadrian came up to Tivoli.

It was an extraordinary thing to stand there at night and hear all those fountains plashing. In a grotto at the midmost of the terrace the water gushed from the dark arch and leapt boldly, in a cascade, to the second level. Swallowed there into a tunnel, it spread widely underground and rose once more into a hundred delicate jets, and, once more disappearing, was gathered, in the middle of the third terrace, into a single column of white spray, spouting bravely. Afterwards, this water made a fence of slender jets for the central stairway ; while another source plunging out of a Cave of Oracle gloomy beneath huge

cypresses and ilexes, reappeared, whispering from the lions' mouths set in a low wall running the whole breadth of the garden. There were exactly one hundred of them, and the path was called the Path of the Talking Fountains. Finally, all these waters streamed together into three large basins set end to end across the base of the garden, and then poured away, underground, to rejoin the Aniene.

The noise of the larger fountains was deadened, somewhat, even in that stone garden, by the ancient trees which grew around them, fencing, too, its sides and lower limit from the wider air and light; and the smaller jets fell, often enough, through fronds of every sort of fern—maidenhair in especial profusion veiled the stonework with its glamour of intricate green—and through sprays of starry periwinkle, of cyclamen, and of trailed geraniums and dim roses. And everywhere the moss spread soft carpets, soaking up the dancing drops.

Therefore from century to century the imprisoned stream had made hushed music down the precipitous garden, while Emperor, and barbarian, and Cardinal and courtier had passed by; and now the sad Englishman listened to its talk, and watched it, a floating silver veil at midnight, or, as now, a golden mist softening the austere green.

He was looking for his little daughter Ursula, with whom he came to play always at this hour. His life found, in her, the only reality round which it consented to twine itself. He played with her shyly but affectionately, and she loved this, and asked nothing better.

But to-day she had had, and was still having, a great adventure.

She was at the bottom of the garden, though she was

not allowed to go there by herself, because of the three deep basins with their low parapets. As a rule she was an obedient little girl; but to-day she had run after a big brown butterfly, floating lazily only a little ahead of her; and now she was watching cypress-cones afloat in the blue-green water. Suddenly she stopped amazed. On the edge of the furthest tank, a Faun was seated. He looked like a boy of eight or nine years old; his glossy goat's legs plashed in the water, and you could not see his hoofs. His small velvety horns were lost in his tangle of hair. His skin was burnt to the most delicate and transparent amber; his eyes were brown like water over peat. His lips were always laughing; across his low forehead ran already a marked depression, parallel to the brows.

"Oh!" said Ursula, and remained staring.

The Faun splashed with his legs in the water and smiled unconcernedly.

Then she recovered herself.

"How do you do, little boy?" she said.

She thought he was a small *contadino* in furry knickerbockers, and she was not in the least shy of *contadini*. They loved her, one and all, and she invariably began by thinking they could talk English.

He laughed suddenly, and answered with a question.

"What do they call you?" he said.

"Ursula Dolores," said she, a little inclined to think him rude; but, so well-trained was she to pretty manners that at once she added, "Daddy says Ursula means a little bear!"

"And I'm a Faun," said the other, still laughing.

Ursula had never seen or even heard of Fauns before; but she had learnt numberless fairy-tales in which the

princess was spell-bound as a doe, or the bad fairy as a hedgehog. So naturally she thought the opposite might happen, and no idea that she was making the absurdest mistake occurred to her, when she thought he meant he was a Fawn, in human shape.

So she said *Ooo*, with her eyes very wide open indeed. Then she asked him in an awed whisper, how long he had been like that.

"Once," said he, "I was just a voice. I and my brothers and sisters lived among these hills, and on those plains, there round Rome. Then, somehow, I found that, when people saw me, I seemed to them like this, as you see me: and little by little I grew to see myself so, too."

Ursula had no notion what he meant. "But, dear Fawn," she said, "how old are you? I'm five."

"And I," said he whimsically, "am five times five hundred!"

"Oh, Fawn," she said reproachfully, "you *can't* be that!"

"Don't you believe me?" said he, and looked into her eyes, and she deep into his.

She saw at once he told no lie; had she been much older, she would have guessed in the Faun's strange look an almost infinite experience, coupled with the sorrow of one who is resigned never to understand. . . .

But he laughed again, and Ursula, all excitement, cried, "Oh, Fawny dear; *do*, *do* tell me all about it. Tell me about your Mummy and your Daddy, and who they were."

The Faun understood, and constantly he laughed, a tinkling laugh, like shallow water over pebbles.

"Ah! but who," asked he, "could tell *me* that?

Perhaps a song and the echoing rocks; or the wind rushing through the grass, or the river washing through whistling reeds; some Nymph, and, it may be, some Faun of these parts, or from beyond the hills."

"But didn't they *love* you? Don't you remember them?"

"I am not sure I know what you mean by your word 'remember.' Constantly I know, when I am playing or bathing or listening to the wind—'all this is old . . . old . . . I have been in this, I have belonged to this—ages upon ages . . . I am in it; it is all in me. . . .' But if I should try to tell you when, or how; or paint a picture of what I feel I have within me—why, the sun would flicker, and the trees would wave and shudder, and the light and music die out of the water, and the world would become thin and wan, and all my head would be full of sighs and whisperings. . . . No: I do not *remember*."

Again she could not understand.

"My Mummy died," she said. "Perhaps your Mummy died before you *could* remember."

"Die?" said he. "Oh no: we can't die."

There was a pause. An awful greyness stole underneath the sunshine.

"But, Fawn," she said, astonished, "if you can't die, aren't you afraid of growing dreadfully, dreadfully old? It is so sad to be old and weak and ugly. My dear Mummy was so lovely when she died!"

"Dear little girl," said the gentle Faun, "I don't know what you mean by what you say. I know men talk to one another about the future, and what it holds; but just as the past they speak of does not exist for me like that, so neither does the future. I feel myself part of what I see

and touch and feel; now already *it* is old, and always *it* grows older, and I with it, and I think it enters more deeply into my dreams—for I have ghosts in my head and faces constantly appearing and then vanishing, and voices that I know *have just* spoken, but the words were missed. . . . But no! I have no plans or hopes or thoughts about the future; nor about death. I am *this:* and unless all this should die, I cannot go. And always when it seems about to die, then I grow dim and weak like a mist on the marshes; but always it starts back to life again—and that alternate throb in me and in all around me I can feel and remember, for it is my life that ebbs and flows."

"Fawn," said the little Ursula, who had listened without understanding anything, save that the Faun seemed sad, "what do you play at when it's playtime? I believe it's *always* playtime for you. I don't believe you ever have to do lessons. . . ."

She didn't know why she thought this.

"I play," he answered, "as the winds and butterflies and clouds play. I lie there in the sun, and listen to the grass clicking and straining and unfolding, and see the flowers unfurl themselves into gold and pink and white, and the butterflies opening and shutting their wings as they sit on them. And I feel the sun pouring right through everything. Or I listen to the rain pattering on the terrace, or to the Talking Fountains, or to the little twigs snapping in the holm-oaks, and the birds fluttering and the cypress fruit falling. . . . And I sleep . . . oh yes, I think I must sleep long. Things feel so much older and wiser when I wake."

Yet there was much in his play, when April sprang pulsing through his veins, of which he did not tell her.

Perhaps he too had intuitions. Perhaps, while she was there, all consciousness alien to her fragrant childhood evaporated from his stored awareness.

But at that moment Basil Croft appeared at the end of the walk and called to Ursula. She looked round, and when she turned back again the Faun was gone.

"Oh, Daddy!" she cried, "I've been having such a lovely time! I've been talking to a Fawn."

"A Fawn, darling?" said he, supposing this to be some new game of make-believe.

"Yes, Daddy! he was a little brown boy with knickers, like—like the goat, Daddy, only brown instead of black. He sat on the edge over there and said such funny things!"

"A little boy?" asked Basil, bewildered. "With knickers like . . ." Suddenly a light broke in upon him "A *Faun*, dearest, do you mean? Where have you been hearing about fauns?"

"I haven't, Daddy," she insisted. "I've been *talking* to him. *My* Fawn was like a little boy, only he said he was five times five hundred years old, and he lies in the sun listening to the grass growing, and once upon a time he was only a voice, and——"

"Ursula, dearest," said he, "tell Daddy whom you've been talking to?"

"I've told you, Daddy," she said, reproachfully. "Isn't it true what he said?"

"Why," said Basil, "once upon a time when the old, old pagans—oh, long before Rome was built—lived here, they thought all the strange voices and sounds they heard in the country were real persons—like fairies—and they called them Fauns; and afterwards the Greeks came, who believed in Satyrs—sort of half men and half goats—and they thought the Fauns must be the same as their Satyrs."

"That's it, Daddy! He was just like the little Satyr-boy you have in your study, I remember now! Oh, *why* didn't I look to see his horns! But, Daddy, he said he couldn't remember, and he couldn't wonder what was going to happen to him, and he couldn't die, and he just liked playing in the sun and going to sleep. Oh, Daddy, he *was* so funny."

They were both too excited to play, and after talking about the Faun for half-an-hour, Ursula went away with her nurse.

Basil walked onwards, in the sunset lost in excited dreams. It was less that he asked himself whether Ursula could really have seen a Faun, or imagined the interview, or was a victim of some untested psychological influence, than that the whole ideal of the Faun's life suddenly rose up and looked him in the face. He knew well that these thoughts of aloofness, seclusion, repression, were bleeding his soul white. He could watch himself dying. . . . And there were moments when from the roots of his personality the furious will-to-live came forcing its way out and up and cried tempestuously for recognition. Yes; what he longed for, in his heart, was the free, careless and conscienceless life of men. He dared not grasp it; conscience would protest. He knew that conscience, so far at any rate, was not thus to be garrotted. Yet here *was* a life, conceivable at any rate, even if realized only in imagination, where memory contained no reproach, and the future no summons, but which lived itself out in a rapturous concentrated present, afraid neither of death, nor of age.

As he thought this, and his will leapt to his desire, he fancied he caught sight of the Faun astride of the old

dolphin throwing up his delicate curving jets. He gasped, and all his consciousness ran back towards his heart, and with the cessation of the evocatory will, the vision disappeared. But instantly a strong reaction made itself felt throughout him, and his whole body thrilled to the rush of his soul demanding life and communion with fierce, untrammelled nature. The garden wavered for a moment before him; a convergent force-stream seemed to pour from it as he prayed—for his will was prayer—and this time there was no doubt that the Faun, a strong young man with vigorous goat's legs and hoofs, with pointed ears and butting horns, and black eyes, was riding the dolphin, kicking its stone sides, and laughing lustily.

Basil forced back his fears, his wonder, his questioning, and marched straight forward.

"Hail, Faun," said he.

During the conversations which ensued, this curious fact was to be observed. The appearance of the Faun varied according to the state of mind of Basil. If he yielded ever so slightly to distractions, the Faun became as it were vague in value and like artificial flowers mingled with real roses. In proportion as Basil grew excited or eager, the Faun grew not only more firm in colouring and contour, but more robust, more muscular. His expression was decided, too; and became unmistakably brutal. The bold, unwinking eyes laughed unbelievingly; the mouth grew full and at once scornful and alluring; the nose thickened, and the forehead, with its marked depression, seemed less puzzled or dismayed than merely untroubled by all travail of thought.

When it was excessively hot they kept to the garden,

Basil pacing, usually, up and down, and the Faun sprawling on the carpet of pine needles and cypress dust, or perched, swinging his legs, on a balustrade, or letting the fountain jets sluice over him, and then scorching his brown skin in the sun where it caught the glowing pavement. Else—and this the Faun preferred—they would wander in the fields at the bottom of the garden, lying hid among the strong-scented, brittle sedge of fennel-stalks, or myrtle shrubs, or crushing the thyme and mint sprigs into fragrance. Basil noticed that no animal nor insect feared the Faun. Indeed, when with his hoofs he beat a tattoo against the stones, the birds would twitter loudly, and the bleating of goats and kids would come echoing round them. Once a *contadino* passed close to them: he stared full at the Faun, without, however, appearing to see him; yet a look of fear crossed his face. As he saluted the *padrone* he made, too, the Sign of the Cross, and for a moment, to Basil, the Faun seemed indistinguishable from the pale stubble and the soil.

Little by little, Basil, who loved to philosophize, thought he could understand the whole psychology of the Faun, and even why he was there. The Faun was, as it were, the expression, or the formal manifestation of the life that was ultimate in all that countryside; and he could be what he was just because, for centuries, that life was essentially unchanged. Not only the flowers and trees and heat and hills were as they had ever been, but these waters and fountains—they still intermingled their natural, spontaneous qualities with that mysterious artificiality which betokened the mind of man; and this Faun, who united in himself humanity and the wild life of plant and herd and wind and sun, could find among them a home which

never need drive him into exile. As long as the fountains and the fields were what they were, and the minds of the men who dwelt there suffered no inward change, so long might the Faun remain there himself and enter into communication with humanity. But at once the intuition came to Basil, first, that it was with few enough that he seemed to speak: none in that neighbourhood had ever mentioned to him the reputed presence there of a Faun; there were no legends—save of the vaguest kind, when stories would be told of frightened girls, or children driven mad, or men who came back from the fields, cursing Christ, none knew why, and ending, perhaps, in suicide; or, again, of holy priests and hermits who exorcized devils from the hills, or even, who entered into conversation with the birds and beasts, and saw God everywhere. But all this was easy of interpretation, and the *contadino* had not seen the Faun the day he met them. Had then the minds of these *contadini* changed, yet not his own? Was he, alone of them all, a lineal descendant from the pagans . . .? Was he not, like them, a Catholic . . .? Ah! of that he was no longer so sure; now, not even as an enemy did that religion present itself before him. And the Dome was but an incident of the horizon.

Yet Ursula! *She* had seen the Faun, the dear baby—a smaller faun, no doubt, a gentler, purer creature, yet definitely a faun, a bit of a pagan soul, a thing of naturalism. Was Pan then not wholly evil? Were pagandom and the Church not wholly divorced? And he recalled with a smile the old rationalist taunts. No! it was not that; but were indeed the souls of pagan cult and Christian not wholly disparate . . .?

However that might be, it was a shock to him to see

how his own mood would alter, as we said, the Faun's appearance. When he was all enjoyment of the sun and of the flowers the Faun was gay, brilliant, a good comrade ; when Basil philosophized and tried to separate himself, and stand aloof, and analyze his world, the Faun's eyes grew vacant ; his lips hung loose like an idiot's ; no response showed itself in his flaccid limbs and attitude. When he was sad, and allowed the melancholy of the world's constant decay, undying death, and futile cycle of existence to dominate him, then again in the Faun's eyes welled upwards the sadness of twilight, of unwatched waters falling through the woods, of ancient places in which life had throbbed, and had passed. Bewilderment ; no anchor of faith ; no parted clouds showing the stars of hope : the deplorable insufficiency of existence. But once (for, extraordinary as it may seem, Basil's soul alternated with increasing rapidity and emphasis between a loathing of this universe and a worship of it—of *it*, in itself and as though it were the all, and therefore God) he sprang back in terror. He had, in a moment of despair, clutched at what earth was, accepted it, and made of it his God, renouncing what was further. . . . At that moment, in the Faun's features, peered out a Face, masterful, cruel, lustful, and miserable beyond words, and its eyes, like ice, pierced into the very marrow of Basil's soul. He called on God, and rolled over, hiding his face in his hands. When he turned, the Faun was gone.

Perhaps that moment's outcry ultimately saved him. But during the eighteen months immediately following, Basil met the Faun not unfrequently, and found in his society quite enough to keep him within the limits of the villa and its property. He made no formal or exterior

contract, or apostasy, only interiorly he felt himself dwindling, growing narrower in range of thought or reaction of pleasure; and rarely reading, now, in the Faun's eyes, those hints of distant horizons and deep skies and stored-up centuries. At all times the Faun's mind was not, as it were, spread out towards the past, any more than it reached forth into the future: but it had in it the cumulative consciousness garnered by those antique hills and plains of which he was the spirit. But even this mysterious quality, which used to thrill Basil, now tended to find him numb and irresponsive: he was conscious ever more exclusively of the surface, and of the immediate illusion of his senses.

Meanwhile, Ursula had never seen the Faun again. Perhaps this was because, for a year, her thoughts had been taken up by her preparation for First Communion. Perhaps he never showed himself to more than one person at a time. And in fact, Basil whimsically argued, how should he reveal himself, simultaneously, in the guise suited to the white simplicity of a child and to the half-reckless, half-melancholy moods of a philosopher . . .?

But Corpus Christi had come round, and that morning Ursula had made her First Communion in the old Church of Santa Maria all' Acqua cadente, built above the yet older grotto of the Nymphs. In the evening the old Franciscan who had instructed her came to the garden, and he and Basil, each holding Ursula by the hand, went down into the sunset through the fountains.

To be with his little daughter in her joy (he was far more loyal to her soul's weal than to his own) he had made a violent effort, and had confessed, and received at her side the Body of Christ.

"Look, Daddy," said Ursula; "that's where I saw the Faun."

"That was when you were a little pagan," said the Friar, who had heard the story, and had formed his own opinion. "At least, you didn't know as well as you do now who it is that walks in gardens when the sun sets."

"But, Padre Angelo! I was so happy!"

"Happier than this evening?"

"Oh no, padre! Not nearly. I *am* so happy now. I want to tell everything how happy I am."

"Well, tell them, *carina*," said he, smiling.

"You dear trees," she exclaimed, clapping her hands, "you lovely, lovely fountains; I'd like you to be as happy as I am. Perhaps they really are, Daddy, if we knew."

The Franciscan chanted softly, in its old Italian, the seraphic hymn:

> Laudato sia mio Signore per suor luna et per le stelle,
> In ciel le hai formate clare et belle.
>
> Laudato sia mio Signore per frate vento,
> Et per l'aire et nuvolo, et sereno et ogni tempo;
> Per le quale dai a le tue creature sostentamento.
>
> Laudato sia mio Signore per suor aqua,
> La quale è molto utile et humile et pretiosa et casta. . . .
>
> Laudato sia il mio Signore per nostra madre terra,
> La quale ne sostenta et guberna,
> Et produce diversi fructi et coloriti fiori et herba. . . .

"Yes, padre, but I want to tell them so *themselves*. You tell them."

"O all ye works of the Lord, bless ye the Lord, praise Him and magnify Him for ever.

"O all showers and dew, bless ye the Lord, O dews and frost, O snow and days and nights, bless ye the Lord, praise ye and magnify Him for ever. O all ye things that

sprout within the earth, O fountains, O birds and beasts and sons of men—O ye priests, bless ye the Lord" (went on the son of St. Francis), "O ye servants of the Lord, ye spirits and souls of the righteous, ye holy and humble men of heart, bless ye the Lord, praise Him and magnify Him for ever!"

"There!" he concluded: "all the world joins with little Ursula on her happy day of First Communion."

"Why, padre, padre," said Basil, smiling, but gently; "that's what we call in English the pathetic fallacy."

"Of that I know nothing," said the old man. "But this is her Communion day. When the sin of our first parents violated our peace with God, the whole earth suffered for their sakes, and put forth thorns, and grew stony. Now is the Prince of Peace come back. 'He is our peace,'" he quoted. "Instead of the thorn shall come up the fir tree, and instead of the briar shall come up the myrtle tree. . . . *Benedetto sia Gesù Cristo, vero Dio e vero Uomo.*"

"*Benedetto il nome di Gesù,*" whispered Basil.

"Jesus loved flowers, didn't He, Padre Angelo?" she said.

"*Ma sicuro, carina,*" he affirmed. "He loved the little flowers of the field . . . and the tiny sparrows. . . . The Father clothes them, the Father carries them. . . ."

"And fountains, padre?"

"I think fountains too, dear baby. It is leaping, dancing, pouring water by which He and His best friends love to symbolize His Spirit."

"And even I," said Basil, "when I was a boy, I loved to think of the river winding through New Jerusalem, with the leafy Tree of Life on either side."

"*Fluminis impetus,*" quoted the priest. "The rush of the river gladdens the City of God."

Basil answered with another quotation. "The City of God," said he, "is the world as God sees it."

"Oh, Daddy!" cried Ursula, "how *lovely* if we could only see the world as God sees it."

"She can, can't she, padre?" Basil asked.

"She can learn," he answered. "Remember always, *carina*, that it was the *Padre Eterno* who made it, and who loves it and keeps it; and that the *bambin' Gesù* came to live in it, and that the *Santo Spirito* pours right through it and fills it—oh, up to the brim! Such a fountain! Such sunbeams and bright sprays! And you can be a little *Maria Santissima*, a little *Immacolata*, and bring Jesus to live wherever you go, if you ask hard enough. On your Communion day there is nothing you must be afraid to hope for."

The child and the priest stood silent, entering into the joy of their Lord.

Basil, for a brief space, understood the mystery of Communion. Possibly he might never stand, or by no means yet, at that Centre where they stood, and which is everywhere; yet he too knew for a moment the mystery of that inclusive vision.

Yes! and for a moment he saw, perched there among the cyclamen, the little Faun. He was a baby faun, his skin clear like the palest gold, and his hair silky. He was smiling up, most sweetly, at the old man and the little girl, but they did not see him. He turned to Basil, and, as he turned, Basil looked for the last time into the Faun's eyes, and saw that they were of the purest blue.

λέγωμεν οὖν ἀρξάμενοι . . .

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Martindale, C.C. (S.J.)
AUTHOR
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